

# Towards Loving Service

Prayers on  
Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAP)  
&  
Conference Apostolic Preferences (CAP)



By Jesuits at JDV Campus, Pune & VJ, Delhi

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Jesuits from  
JDV Campus, Pune  
& VJ, Delhi

2019-2020



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# Foreword

The Society of Jesus has been initiated into a PROCESS of understanding and unfolding the implications of Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAP), eliciting personal, communal and institutional conversion. As UAPs were being discussed, the South Asian Jesuits were involved in another process of 'Restructuring for Greater Apostolic Effectiveness' (REGAE I & II). We concluded this process with JCSA Declaration on REGAE (Nov 15, 2019) in which we have identified five apostolic priorities for South Asia (CAP). They do resonate with UAPs; they need to be further aligned in view of greater effectiveness.

There is no better way of aligning UAPs and CAPs than taking them into prayer. In view of ongoing interiorization and acting upon, we are offering this Prayer book. Fr. Ilanko Xavier M. (CEN) in De Nobili College (Pune) and Fr. M.I. Raj (GUJ) in Vidyajyoti (Delhi) coordinated the efforts of scholastics and staff members to bring out this prayer book. We are indebted to them all.

May these prayers help us align UAPs and CAPs in our hearts so that they move us to act upon them leading to a transformation of our way of looking at the world.

**George Pattery, SJ.**

**POSA**



# Preface

Dear Friends in the Lord,

## **Why this prayer book?**

“The Universal Apostolic Preferences ... are the fruits of an election. ... Our desire has been to find the best way to collaborate in the Lord’s mission.” “We accept them as a mission of the Church through Pope Francis, who has approved them by confirming the communal discernment that was undertaken by the apostolic body. ... The preferences seek to unleash a process of apostolic revitalization and creativity that makes us better servants of reconciliation and justice.”

Pope Francis, in his letter to Fr. General on 6th Feb. 2019, makes the following admonition about the UAPs in general and on the first, viz. “To show the way to God through the Spiritual Exercises and Discernment”, in particular: “The first preference is capital because it presupposes as a basic condition the Jesuits’ relationship with the Lord in a personal and communal life of prayer and discernment. I recommend to you that, in your service as Superior General, you insist on this. Without this prayerful attitude the other preferences will not bear fruit.”

Our Constitutions further endorse what Pope Francis has just said: [813] “... For these interior gifts are necessary to make those exterior means efficacious for the end, which is being sought.” Fr. Arrupe emphasizes that without the right inner dispositions our external actions, however good they may seem, have no value in the eyes of God.

The Spiritual Exercises (SE) meant for the above, orients us towards the same end. Having experienced the love of God in the first week we ask for the grace to be ready and diligent to accomplish his most holy will (SE 91). So the Eternal King declares that “whoever wishes to come with me must labor with me, so that through following me in the pain he or she may follow me also in the glory” (SE 95). Finally, our mission flows out from the meditation on contemplation to attain love. “Love ought to manifest itself more by deed than words” (SE 230). Effectiveness of our Apostolate relies 100% on this realization which is being witnessed to by our beloved Pope, who is an embodiment of the Exercises in today’s world.

### **The ‘How’ of this prayer book?**

The prayers presented here are expected to attain the same goal – *‘Towards Loving Service’*. The prayer themes are derived from the UAPs and CAPs. There are four UAPs. Under each UAP three relevant sub-themes are identified. Each theme is attempted to be understood in the light of the dynamics of the SE – purgative, illuminative and unitive ways; and therefore, on each theme we have three prayers. The first one would help us experience 1st week’s grace by making us realize our shortcomings and guiding us to pray for repentance; the second one will help us renew the 2nd week’s grace of knowing Jesus by reflecting on the theme from the perspective of the life of Jesus; and in and through the third prayer it is intended to provide an experience of the 3rd and 4th weeks’ graces by identifying life-mission challenges and joys and moving us to praise and thank God. Under CAP we have five preferences and each focuses on three themes. The prayer on each theme is presented on the Ignatian meditation pattern in order to connect with the dynamics and to reap the graces of the SE.

**The prayers have been composed not in a rigid manner, but leave ample scope for compressing or expanding according to your need, circumstances and the availability of time. They could be used as community prayers as well as personal prayers for a particular purpose. The book could also be used as a useful guide for eight-day retreat on UAP. It could be done, for example, by clubbing all the first parts together for the first week’s grace; the**

**second parts together for the second week's grace; and the third parts together for the third and fourth week's graces.**

“There is rejoicing among angels of God over one repentant sinner” (Lk 15:10). When we make the first week type of prayer we acknowledge God's love and repent for our shortcomings, which would make angels rejoice!

Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to the infants” (Lk 10:21). As we pray for growing in the knowledge of Jesus, the second week's grace, we could also feel one with Jesus rejoicing for the Father's way of revealing to us!

“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely, on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.” (Mt 5:11-12). As we imbibe the third and fourth week's graces we will be able to rejoice as our Pope does. Thus, we will be able to joyfully carry forward the Apostolic Preferences as our Founding Fathers did.

Let us rejoice and thus become joyful witnesses! May this book be a tool for us to grow more in realizing our Call and to cherish the richness of our own mysticism of daily service!

### **Remembering Gratefully ...**

We thank Fr. George Pattery, S.J., POSA, for entrusting this task of coordinating the mission of preparing the prayer book '*Towards Loving Service*' based on UAP & CAP for the use of the Conference. We thank Frs. Joseph A. D'Mello (KAR) and Francis Pudhicherry (GUV) for laying the foundation for the prayer book '*Towards Loving Service*' by providing us with their expertise in formulating the themes and procedures. We gratefully appreciate all the Composers of the prayers (Jesuits from the Campuses of JDV, Pune and VJ, Delhi) for their valuable contributions to '*Towards Loving Service*' keeping the timeline and abiding by the format proposed. We acknowledge the excellent creative output of Sch. Arockia Amalan V. (MDU) and DNC Times team and appreciate them for the self communicative and meaningful cover design for the '*Towards Loving Service*'.

We thank Fr. Michael Alosanaya (MDU) for his valid suggestions on the initial drafts of the prayers. We are greatly indebted to Fr. Vincent Saldanha (GUJ) for his patient and meticulous editing of the prayers on UAP with zeal and clarity. Thanks to Fr. Leo A. Tagore (MDU) who took the prayers on CAP and polished the language and ensured uniform lay-out of the prayer services with needed occasional insertions including the novel reality of Corona crisis. We are grateful to Fr. Lourduraj Arockiasamy (CEN), who was readily available for editing part of the prayer book, in order to speed up the process. We thank Fr. Anthony Pitchai Vedam (GUJ) for his ready acceptance to bring out '*Towards Loving Service*' in time from GSP, Anand.

24<sup>th</sup> May, 2020 (Sunday)  
Solemnity of Ascension of the Lord  
Feast of Our Lady of the Way

**Hanko Xavier M., SJ.**  
**Manickam Irudayaraj, SJ.**

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# *Part I*



**PRAYERS ON  
THE UNIVERSAL APOSTOLIC  
PREFERENCES  
(UAP)**





## **UAP 1.a.1 REDISCOVERING THE IMAGE OF GOD**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Introduction:**

God created humankind in his image (Gn. 1:27). Very often we have our own image of God that gives different ideas from different points of view. We interpret this image based on the context we are in. Our Holy Father St. Ignatius proposes in the first week of spiritual exercises that we discover and recognize the limitations and misconceptions about the right image of God. This will make our discernment proper and would give us clear motivation and conviction to serve God for His greater glory. Therefore, in this prayer service let us open our minds and hearts and purify the false notions of God. Let us pray for the gift of right image of God so that we can grow better as men of discernment.

### **Grace:**

To identify our false understanding of God that blocks our involvement in our universal apostolate of Christ's Mission, and to grow in the joy of repentance.

### **Context/Composition:**

The philosopher Nicholas Cusa says in his book *Of Learned Ignorance* that God is "Absolute Maximum" and we human beings are the reflection of the universe; in each one, the oneness of the

totality (God) is reflected. Hence the whole of creation is necessarily related to each other. Therefore, today in this world we have many opportunities to discover Him. Eventually everyone needs to find God and relate with Him accordingly by going beyond our own ideas and breaking through our boundaries. St. Mother Teresa discovered the thirsting Jesus on the roadside of Kolkata. St. Alphonsus Rodriquez encountered God when he was a doorkeeper for nearly forty years. Pope Francis sees God as Mercy and discerns accordingly.

**Song:** Open my eyes Lord - <https://youtu.be/wutmEjdbedE>

## **Readings:**

### ***Jn. 8:39-43:***

The Jews answered Jesus, "Abraham is our Father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing what Abraham did, but now you are trying to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what Abraham did. You are indeed doing what your father does." They said to him, "We are not illegitimate children; we have one Father, God himself." Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now I am here. I did not come on my own, but he sent me. Why do you not understand what I say?"

### ***1 Cor. 2:12-16:***

"Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. And we speak of these things in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the spirit, interpreting spiritual things to those who are spiritual. Those who are unspiritual do not receive the gifts of God's spirit, for they are foolishness to them and they are unable to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. Those who are spiritual discern all things and they are themselves subject to no one else's scrutiny. 'For who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?' But we have the mind of Christ."

## Questions for Reflection:

1. What are the idols that block me from having the right image of God?
2. How far does my understanding of God influence my practice of discernment?
3. Am I moving closer to the image and likeness of God within me?
4. Do my studies, relationships, and attitudes reflect my growth in this area?

(Pause and reflect)

## Prayers of Repentance:

*Response:* **Lord, purify our understanding of you; help us grow in the right image...**

1. God of forgiveness and mercy, there are moments we failed to experience you as the source of mercy, and have condemned each other, and our people. We seek your mercy and forgiveness. **℟**
2. God of all, we have failed to discover the presence of the Divine Master in our neighbour, and your manifestations in all religions. We have failed to build a peaceful community. We seek your mercy and forgiveness. **℟**
3. Triune God, we have neglected the prompting of your Spirit in our communities and missions. We ask your grace that we may be attuned to the Spirit and respond to the needs of the times. We seek your mercy and forgiveness. **℟**
4. God of Truth, we alienate ourselves from you by misinterpreting your manifestations as did the Pharisees. We seek your mercy and forgiveness. **℟**
5. God of the heaven and earth, you manifest yourself in all your missions showering your graces upon us. There are times when we tend to neglect and underestimate certain apostolic works, and even our companions. We seek your mercy and forgiveness. **℟**

## Concluding Prayer:

God of mystery and wonder, we thank you for your manifestations in multiple forms so that no one goes without discovering you. You have bestowed the gift of discernment upon St. Ignatius, and the Society of Jesus. You have been blessing our Society through this simple tool to discover you radically in our lives. We implore you to give us the opportunity to serve you ardently through the Universal Apostolic Preferences and we ask your constant blessings and graces to encounter you with open hearts. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. **Rx:** Amen.

*Sch. Johnson M. Francis (AND)*



## **UAP 1.a.2 Interior Knowledge of God**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

To look at my inner self so that I realize that your love for me is ceaseless, and respond by offering my wholehearted service to the neediest of your people.

### **Reading for Reflection**

Jesus says, “Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened” (Mt. 7:7-8). Knowledge is attained when we desire it and are willing to work for it. So also, an interior knowledge of God is gained by prayer, daily reading of the Scriptures, and by listening to and living the Gospel message. In the Spiritual Exercises Ignatius asks the exercitant to pray for the grace to know Christ more intimately so as to love him more intensely and follow him more closely.

### **Autobiography of St. Ignatius**

“...As he went along occupied with his devotions, he sat down for a little while with his face toward the river, which ran down below. While he was seated there, the eyes of his understanding began to be opened; not that he saw any vision, but he understood and learned

many things, both spiritual matters and matters of faith and of scholarship and this with so great an enlightenment that everything seemed new to him. The details that he understood then, though there were many, cannot be stated, but only that he experienced a great clarity in his understanding. This was such that in the whole course of his life, after completing sixty-two years, even if he gathered up all the various helps he may have had from God and all the various things he has known, even adding them all together, he does not think he had got as much as at that one time” (AB30).

### **Points for Reflection:**

1. Ignatius, besides knowing God’s call for the greater glory, started discovering himself at Manresa: Am I waiting for such moments in my life too, to open up fully to God and serve him?
2. Ignatius eventually knew the purpose of his life and God’s plan for him: As a Jesuit, do I know God or just know about Him?  
Where does my relation with, and the interior knowledge of, God lie?

(Pause for reflection)

### **Prayers of Petition:**

***Response: Lord, grant that we may grow in our interior knowledge of you.***

1. In Jesus’ time people understood God as the God of the Law. Jesus taught his disciples that God is our Father, the God of Love. Let us ask Jesus to bless and guide us. **℟**
2. The first and most desirable grace is that we be intimately united to God and feel at home with Him whether in prayer or when otherwise occupied [C723]. May the Lord help us grow in familiarity with Him who is constantly at work for the Kingdom. **℟**

3. Ignatius shows us the ‘Three ways of being Humble’. Ignatius teaches us that humility does not ultimately depend on personal effort but openness to God’s power. May the Lord give us with the grace to be humble and offer ourselves to Him whatever the consequences. **℟**
4. Though we call ourselves ‘Friends in the Lord’, there are times when there are conflicts among us. When this happens, we tend to search for peace outside the Society. May the Lord give us the grace to realise that we are in His service, and to remain ‘friends in the Lord.’ **℟**
5. We are called to follow Christ and serve Him. At times, we get diverted by worldly thoughts. Let us ask the Lord to help us to focus on Him and His will. **℟**

### **Hymn:**

Hill Song Worship – From the Inside Out. <https://youtu.be/4Ke37l7lpBs>

### **Concluding Prayer:**

Most loving and humble Jesus, help us to know you more intimately and personally. Energise us so that we may face the challenges of life and of the Mission, and remain your humble servants. You who live and reign forever and ever. **℟**: Amen.

*Sch. James Ekka (RAN)*

## **UAP 1.a.3 Familiarity with God**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

We ask for the grace of familiarity with God through the interior knowledge and experience of the saving love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

### **Context/Composition:**

Ignatius' experience of growing in familiarity with God was a 'Divine Adventure' which he cherished when he surrendered himself to the Lord. This adventure led him even to places he was unfamiliar with. It also led him as a stranger to those places which were familiar to him. Ignatius is the model for us who want to grow in familiarity with God. Familiarity with God is not a call to passivity but a call to experience God's labour of love which is for our salvation. This familiarity in turn leads a person to actions of love.

### **Texts for Reflection:**

- 1. *Jn. 14:8-14*: "Show us the Father!"**
- 2. *Acts 9:3-6*: Paul's familiarity of God**

### 3. The Autobiography of St Ignatius

“One day, when he was a few miles from Rome, he entered a church to pray, and there felt his soul so moved and changed, and saw so clearly that God the Father placed him with Christ His Son, that he did not dare to doubt it” (AB 96).

“...He had always grown in devotion, that is, ease in finding God; and now more than ever in his whole life. Every time, any hour, that he wished to find God, he found him. And even now he often had visions, especially those mentioned above in which he saw Christ as the sun. This often happened while he was engaged in important matters, and that gave him confirmation” (AB 99).

### 4. Prayer of St. Francis Xavier:

My God, I love thee; not because I hope for heaven thereby, nor yet because who love thee not are lost eternally. Thou, O my Jesus, thou didst me upon the cross embrace; for me didst bear the nails and spear, and manifold disgrace. And grief and torments numberless and sweat of agony; even death itself, and all for one who was thy enemy. Then why, O blessed Jesus Christ should I not love thee well? Not for the hope of winning heaven, or of escaping hell; not with the hope of gaining aught, nor seeking a reward, but as thyself has loved me, O ever-loving Lord! Even so I love thee, and will love and in thy praise will sing, solely because thou art my God, and my eternal king.

### Points for Reflection:

1. What are those joyous moments of familiarity of God we have cherished in our life?
2. How have we helped others to have familiarity with God through our mission?
3. What are the hardships/challenges that we encounter in growing in familiarity with God?

## **Prayers of Praise and Gratitude:**

*Response: Almighty God, we thank and praise you for revealing yourself to us.*

1. We thank you for all the people who are familiar with you and are striving to bring peace in this divided world. We thank you for the seed of inspiration you have planted in our hearts that makes us labour without counting the cost. **℟**
2. We thank you for all men and women dedicated making you known in the world. In flame us too with your love so as to serve you in humanity. **℟**
3. Father, Lord of heaven and earth, we thank you for revealing yourself to the poor and the weak. May we also continue to have a child-like confidence in you. May we see and understand you better. **℟**
4. We praise you for the graces you shower upon us by your presence in the Eucharist. We pray that we may be drawn towards your saving and healing touch through the Eucharist. **℟**
5. We thank you for the moments of consolation that we have found in you and you alone as we travel in this journey of life. May we always seek to serve your divine majesty, inflamed by your love. **℟**

## **Concluding Prayer:**

Striving for a greater familiarity of God, as our founder Ignatius of Loyola wanted us to, we have discovered that the ideal way to do this is by remaining in union with you. Help us to see your suffering face in the poor, the outcasts, those on the margins of society, those who are victims of wars and violence. Teach us to serve you in them enkindled by the fire of your love. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **℟: Amen.**

*Sch. Evan Basnet (DAR)*

## **UAP 1.b.1 Becoming Indifferent**

### **Opening Hymn:**

Follow me, follow me, leave your home and family,  
Leave your fishing nets and boats upon the shore.  
Leave the seed that you have sown,  
Leave the crops that you have grown,  
Leave the people you have known and follow me.  
The foxes have their holes,  
And the swallows have their nests,  
But the Son of man  
Has no place to lie down.  
I do not offer comfort,  
I do not offer wealth,  
But in me will all happiness be found.

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

That every Jesuit and apostolic community may realize the hurdles in responding with total interior freedom to the challenges of UAP.

### **Context/Composition:**

The Constitutions [813] endorse what Pope Francis has said "... For these interior gifts are necessary to make those exterior means

efficacious for the end, which is being sought.” Without the right inner disposition our external actions, however good they may seem, have no value in the eyes of God. During this prayer hour let us explore the hurdles to inner freedom.

## **Scripture Reading:**

### ***Gn. 22:1-2, 8b-12:***

Sometime later, God tested Abraham and said to him, “Abraham!” And he answered, “Here I am.” Then God said, “Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love and go to the land of Moriah and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I shall point out to you.” They went on, the two of them together, until they came to the place to which God had directed to them. When Abraham had built the altar and set the wood on it, he bound his son Isaac and laid him on the wood placed on the altar. He then stretched out his hand to seize the knife and slay his son. But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven, “Abraham! Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” “Do not lay your hand on the boy;” the angel said, “do not harm him, for now I know that you fear God, and you have not held back from me your only son.”

## **Reflection:**

Abraham went up to the mountain for three days with Isaac. He was so filled with faith and trust in God, that he could remain indifferent to all created things. Abraham’s indifference did not mean that he did not love Isaac. But he had gained a freedom that enabled him to trust God totally. The letter to the Hebrews states that Abraham believed that God could even raise the dead (Heb.11:19). Abraham’s experience of God’s goodness and God’s strength and God’s wisdom was such that he could trust God absolutely - he could be indifferent to everything else.

(Pause for reflection)

## **Meditative listening:**

Becoming indifferent (spiritually free) is a lifelong process. In the Spiritual Exercises St. Ignatius proposes “an active indifference

in virtue of which we are to act in such a way that both the using and the leaving of things can and must be our own responsibility... The (equi) distance from things is a goal that must always be won and re-won again and again” (Karl Rahner. Sp. Ex., 1965). This attitude is essential for us to make right decisions to “collaborate effectively in God’s mission.”

(Pause for reflection)

In the light of UAP, collaborating effectively in God’s mission today would mean that we have the spirit of ‘indifference’ (spiritual freedom) to take responsibility for the ecological issues like global warming, overpopulation and saving the planet, socio-political issues like international law, worldwide poverty, emerging diseases, the proliferation of nuclear weapons and terrorism, psycho-spiritual challenges such as the need to develop cosmic consciousness, a new system-thinking, mind-set and an attitude that pursues continual improvement in all areas of human and ecological development.

(Pause for reflection)

This seems like a tall order, but God in his love and wisdom has given us the means to accomplish it. “The other things on the face of the earth are created for the human beings, to help them in the pursuit of the end for which they were they are created” (SE 23).

(Pause for reflection)

But, here is the challenge: “man must make use of them as far as they help him in the attainment of his end, and he must rid himself of them in as far as they prove a hindrance to him” (SE 23). There is too much evidence in the Bible and human history of man’s inability to use creatures correctly, to truly serve the Lord to accomplish his plan. Ignatius on his part does not give any set of rules telling him exactly what the will of God is for him personally. But he leads him through a series of prayer materials on the life of Christ, gradually disposing him to grow in his capacity to act and choose and desire to do the “magis”, the more, the greater thing, which demands ‘indifference’. Ignatius’ description of indifference is that of a balance at equilibrium, without leaning to either side (SE

179, 15). Ultimately the reason why a man wants to retain anything will be solely for the service, honour, and glory of the Divine Majesty (SE 16). Rahner also warns us: “Unless we operate on the principles of indifference and magis there is danger in life of self-centredness and the danger of going from one excess to another.”

(Pause for reflection)

### **Personal reflection:**

1. Where do I lack indifference in the use of creatures?
2. Where does my community/institution lack indifference in the use of creatures?
3. Am I willing to make lifestyle changes to network and collaborate for a more effective mission in the light of UAP?
4. Is my community/institution willing to make lifestyle changes to network and collaborate for a more effective mission in the light of UAP?
5. What are the internal and external obstacles I encounter in implementing UAP in my mission?

### **Prayers of Repentance:**

*Response:* **Lord, purify our hearts.**

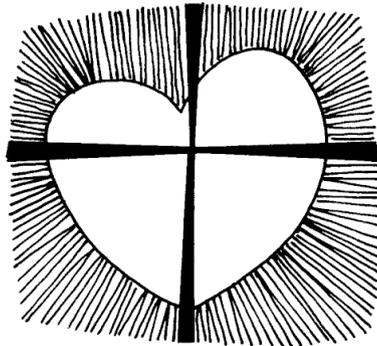
1. That we may put our complete faith and trust in the Lord, so that we may reject all worldly attractions and temptations and commit ourselves totally to our mission of justice and reconciliation, let us pray the Lord. **℟**
2. That we may become aware of what blocks us from imitating Jesus who came in poverty, to reach out to the people at the periphery like the refugees, migrants and the victims of our socio-political system, let us pray to the Lord. **℟**
3. That we may reject the consumerist culture and greed that destroy our eco-system and the lives of the poor, and work in collaboration with others to rebuild and restore our broken world, let us pray the Lord. **℟**

4. That we may not go after power, privilege and positions, especially the modern plague of clericalism, but imitate Jesus' humility and humble service, let us pray the Lord. **℟**

**Concluding Prayer:**

Lord! Teach me to be generous; teach me to serve you as you deserve; to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labour and not to ask for reward, save that of knowing that I do your will. **℟**: Amen.

*Fr. Edward Mudavassery (HAZ)*



## **UAP 1.b.2 Becoming Fools for Christ**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty

### **Grace:**

To desire more to be thought worthless and a fool for Christ, who first was taken as such, rather than to be esteemed as wise and prudent in this world (SE 167).

### **Context/Composition:**

In today's context, there is a growing tendency to become proud and self-centred. But the Spiritual Exercises invite us to have a discerning spirit to identify ourselves with Christ, poor and humble. There is a constant struggle in us between these two forces: the forces of the world as opposed to that of Christ. These forces take on diverse forms in different contexts and cultures. Today, we encounter various elements that hinder us from identifying ourselves with Christ, poor and humble.

### **Scripture Reading:**

*Acts 5: 40-42*

- 1. Reflection based on SE 165-168:** The Second Week of the Spiritual Exercises invites the retreatant to journey towards the interior knowledge of Christ, our Lord - an experiential knowledge

so as to identify oneself with the Lord. In the meditation on the three ways of loving or being humble, St Ignatius explicates the spiritual progress – firstly, by following the commandments; secondly, by being ready to do anything for the beloved; and thirdly, by loving to the extent of identifying oneself with the Lord who was poor and humble. The retreatant is encouraged to choose the greater degree of humility to be so closely identified with the Lord that one may wholeheartedly consider oneself even as worthless or a fool in the process of doing anything for Christ.

2. **From GC 36 (GSP, pp. 113-114):** During his dialogue with the Jesuits gathered for GC 36, Pope Francis spelt out that clericalism is one the most serious illnesses of the Church. Clericalism is rich, as the Pope noted, if not in money then in pride. He highlighted the vision of St. Ignatius for whom poverty ‘nurtures, mothers, generates spiritual life, a life of holiness, apostolic life’. Such vision of St. Ignatius helps us identify us with the poor and humble Christ. Moreover, it acts as a wall to protect and defend us. Such vision of poverty, as the Pope expressed, could become the vision for the entire Church.

### **Points for Reflection:**

1. The apostles were happy to suffer dishonour for the sake of the name of Jesus, because they knew that Jesus too had undergone such humiliation and suffering. He suffered for us too. Am I ready to identify myself with Jesus to the extent of suffering dishonour for the sake of the Lord today?
2. Our Lord is a great example of one who has embraced poverty and humility. What are the inner blocks that prevent me from imitating the Lord whom I have chosen to follow? Am I ready interiorly to be considered a fool for Christ?

### **Prayers of Petition:**

*Response: Lord, make us your poor and humble servants.*

1. Lord, help all our clergy and religious that they may take inspiration from the early Christian community to radiate the joy

of the Gospel in order to build a humble and poor Church after the heart of Jesus. ✠ **Lord, make us your poor and humble servants.**

2. The life of St. Ignatius was an intense spiritual journey from a great and foolish desire to win fame to a greater desire to seek only the greater glory of God. He did things which seemed crazy - trying to identify himself with the humble and poor Christ, our Lord. Bless us with such zeal for Christ as true followers of St. Ignatius. ✠
3. St. Ignatius always wanted ours to be the 'least Society' in the service of God. Lord, bless all of us with the courage and dedication to swim against the currents of our time, to serve God with the spirit of humility and apostolic poverty. ✠
4. Love is best expressed in deeds than in words. As we are moved by the life and teaching of Christ, we ask your grace that we may follow the Lord more closely in our life, and experience the joy of being your poor and humble servants. ✠
5. God our Father, we realize that it is hard in our turbulent times to follow the path of Christ our Lord, who was poor and humble for our sake. Bless us with the gift of a discerning heart to know the dynamics of the Two Standards, and set a good example by proclaiming Jesus through our poor and humble life. ✠

**Final Hymn:** (With Joyful Lips, I. 27) He is Lord, He is Lord

### **Concluding Prayer:**

Heavenly Father, the total self-giving of our Lord Jesus Christ has taught us the power of his self-emptying love as well as his total obedience to the Divine Will until his death on the Cross. As we are configured to Christ, our Lord and Saviour, bless us with that overwhelming desire to have the same mind and heart of Jesus. Give us that inner joy of being considered fools for Christ that we may constantly strive to identify ourselves with Christ, poor and humble. We make this prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord. ✠: Amen.

*Fr. Sathyabalan Arockiasamy (CEN)*

## **UAP 1.b.3 Being Placed with Christ Carrying the Cross**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty

### **Opening Hymn:**

Let us begin by singing the hymn “*Jesus, you are my salvation.*”

### **Grace:**

We ask for the grace, to be glad and to rejoice intensely because of the great glory and joy of Christ, our Lord.

### **Scripture Reading:**

***Phil 2:1-5 or Jn 15:5-7:***

1. Ignatius makes a passing reference to the vision of La Storta in the Spiritual Diary when he says that he recalls the day when the Father placed him with the Son. “The Father turned to Jesus carrying the Cross and requested Jesus, ‘I want you to take this man to serve us.’ Jesus with His cross in hand looked at Ignatius and said, ‘We want you to serve us.’” The vision was an answer to the prayer of Ignatius to Mary, an icon of Ignatian spirituality of service. The word ‘you,’ refers not only to Ignatius but also to all who love and find life in Ignatian Spirituality.

2. God the Father imprinted these words on his heart: ‘*Ego ero vobis Romae propitius,*’ but this affirmation did not make Ignatius dream of easy paths, since he told his companions that they would encounter “many contradictions” in Rome, and perhaps even be crucified. It is from Ignatius’ encounter with the Lord at La Storta that the future life of service and mission of the companions emerges in its characteristic contours: following Christ bearing his Cross; fidelity to the Church and to the Vicar of Christ on earth; and living as friends in the Lord in one single apostolic body (GC 35, d2, n11).
3. To follow Christ bearing his Cross means opening ourselves with Him to every thirst that afflicts humanity today. Christ is nourishment itself, the answer to every hunger and thirst. He is the bread of life who, in feeding the hungry, draws them together and unites them (GC 35, d2, n12).
4. To follow Christ bearing his Cross means announcing his Gospel of hope to the many poor who inhabit our world today. The world’s many ‘poverties’ represent thirsts that, ultimately, only he who is living water can assuage (GC 35, d2, n13).
5. The joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept his offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness. Christ’s joy is constantly born anew, the renewed encounter with God’s love blossoms into an enriching friendship; we are liberated from our narrowness and self-absorption. We become fully human when we become more than human, when we let God bring us beyond ourselves in order to attain the fullest truth of our being. Here we find the source and inspiration of all our efforts at evangelization (*Evangelii Gaudium* # 1, 8).

### **Questions for Reflection:**

1. What does “being placed with Christ” mean to me?
2. How can I understand service according to the present-day signs of our times?
3. Is it related only to the work accomplished?

## Prayers of Praise and Gratitude:

*Response:* **Lord we thank and praise you for placing us with your Son, as you did St. Ignatius.**

1. Despite our differences what unites us as Jesuits is Christ and the desire to serve him. Let us pray that we may not be deaf to the call of the Lord, but prompt and ready to do his most holy will. May we continue to know who we are by constantly looking and gazing at him. **℟**
2. Serving Christ's mission today means paying special attention to its global context. May we respond to this context as a universal body with a universal mission of making Christ known to others and actualize the Kingdom of God with faith, love and hope. **℟**
3. Knowing ourselves as placed with Christ through the experience of St. Ignatius, and sent as companions though we are sinners, may we listen attentively to the needs of people whom we seek to serve and thereby respond to the signs of the times in a meaningful manner. **℟**
4. At La Storta, St. Ignatius received the grace from the Father of being placed with His Son and drawn into the Son's pattern of life, joys and sufferings. Let us pray that we be imbued by the spirit of St. Ignatius and thereby make the Universal Apostolic Preferences a dynamic reality in our world. **℟**
5. We are continually called to go with Christ looking at the world with His eyes, loving the world with His heart, and enter into its depths with His unlimited compassion. Let us pray for strength and courage to become fitting instruments of His love, mercy and compassion. **℟**

## Concluding Prayer:

Heavenly Father, the life of St Ignatius teaches us what it means to be placed with your Son today. It invites us to live by the spirit of St. Ignatius and the first companions making Christ the source and summit of our lives. May we be imbued by same spirit and receive

the grace of the continual presence of Christ your Son in our life as we make our pilgrim journey. We make this prayer through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. ✠: Amen

### **Final Hymn:**

Take Lord, Receive.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ngqSG0RMWM>

Vision of Ignatius at La Storta;

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_0Ou9XucC9Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_0Ou9XucC9Q)

*Fr. Joseph Cardozo (GOA)*



## **UAP 1.c.1 Disposition of Discernment**

### **Swan - symbol of discernment**

The swan is known for its ability to drink only the milk from the mixture of milk and water. The ‘swan attitude’ is to always choose the better – the ability to sift the better from the good. What helps the swan to discern? It is its ultra-awareness and single-minded focus on the milk.

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty

### **Grace:**

Lord we ask that you purify our intentions, desires, affections, attachments, and our missionary endeavours so that we are well disposed to discern your will and fulfil it perfectly.

### **Context/Composition:**

A strong and aggressive wave of right-wing politics has crippled humanity today, the growing intolerance towards the minorities in India has left the people baffled and disappointed. Reality looks hazy and blurred with our digitally determined, propagandist, fundamentalist, casteist, elitist, and secular filters. Today’s generation is so busy that it does not have time to even reflect on this sorry state of affairs. Discernment is a handy tool for a renewed apostolic vigour in the service of humanity, particularly in a context of growing and

more widespread secularization. Could we help people sift the better from the good on their spiritual pursuits?

(Pause for a space of a Hail Mary)

### **Scripture Reading:**

(Lk. 13:22-24) “Jesus went through one town and village after another, teaching as he made his way to Jerusalem. Someone asked him, ‘Sir, will only a few be saved?’ He said to them, ‘Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able.’”

### **Ignatian Experience:**

The deliberations of the first companions in Venice: Though they differed in their ethnicity, language and temperament, they disposed themselves well and eagerly sought God’s will with one mind and heart. Their active spiritual life, love for Jesus and His mission, evangelical poverty, availability for mission, closeness to the poor and life in a community bound by love facilitated this process of group discernment.

### **Reflection:**

1. Metaphorically our life-journey is towards Jerusalem. How do we undertake this journey of union with God? What is our disposition? Is it a passive union or is God perhaps asking us to discern and labour with him in the struggles of the poor? What are my inner stirrings, movements, and aspirations? Am I single-mindedly focused on purifying my intentions, attachments, and feelings?
2. ‘Sir, will only a few be saved?’ The question is a classic example of lack of focus and too much interest in futile details. How easy it is to distract ourselves from the real challenges by asking interesting but irrelevant questions. What are some of my intentions, desires, plans, endeavours which appear as coming from God but are not? Am I aware of the evil one coming as an angel of light?

3. While salvation is a gift of God, unmerited; it is clear that God expects us to cherish it as an athlete cherishes the victor's crown - suggesting that we need an athlete's discipline and determination in pursuing entrance through the narrow door. Am I aware of my subtle weaknesses, the places where the enemy attacks, that keep me from being fit spiritually to enter through the narrow door?
4. The right disposition is when we are tranquil and indifferent - neither this side nor that - allowing ourselves to be led by the Spirit for the greater glory of God. Do I make myself vulnerable while I discern the will of God?

### **Prayers of Repentance:**

*Response: Lord, have mercy.*

1. 'Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.' We have not been alert to you in strangers, the marginalized, and the poor. We have failed to invite them to break bread with us, have not been disposed to receiving you in our midst. **℟.**
2. 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?' We have not heard the cry of the poor and the cry of the mother earth? **℟.**
3. The Syro-Phoenician woman said to Jesus, 'Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs.' He said to her, 'For saying that, you may go - the demon has left your daughter.' Even Jesus let go of his idea that salvation was only for the Jews, and extended it bountifully to the Gentiles. Often we have held on to old views and refused to listen to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. **℟.**
4. 'Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight.' We have kept ourselves from recognizing your presence with us. We have failed to feed the poor, and quench the spiritual thirst of your people. **℟.**

5. There are times we have not focused on the Church's central mission of bringing the Good News to all, and indulged in empty discussions and ritualism. **✠ Lord, have mercy.**

### **Concluding Prayer:**

God our Father, May our disposition to do your will be that of your Son, Jesus Christ.

May we have the audacity to walk with strangers without any inhibitions.

May we recognize your illustrious face in the faceless.

May we get rid of all self-will, self-love and self-interest, to experience your infinite goodness.

May our encounter with you drive away our prejudices, inclinations, attachments, and mediocre plans, making us worthy of our calling.

May we have the single-minded focus of purifying ourselves to lead your people to you.

We make this prayer through your Son, Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Sch. Steven Almeida (GOA)*



## **UAP 1.c.2 Discerning with Jesus**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty

### **Grace:**

That I might be ready to follow whatever I discern as being for the greater glory and praise of God.

### **Scripture Readings:**

Let us recite the Psalm 25 which teaches not to do things our way. We must do things God's way. He will always send us help.

To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.  
O my God, in you I trust;  
Do not let me be put to shame;  
Do not let my enemies exult over me.  
Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame;  
Let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.  
    Make me know your ways, O LORD;  
    Teach me your paths.  
    Lead me in your truth, and teach me,  
    For you are the God of my salvation;  
    For you I wait all day long.  
Be mindful of your mercy, O LORD, and of your steadfast love,  
For they have been from of old.  
Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions;

According to your steadfast love remember me,  
For your goodness' sake, O LORD!  
    Good and upright is the LORD;  
    Therefore, he instructs sinners in the way.  
    He leads the humble in what is right,  
    And teaches the humble his way.  
    All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and  
    faithfulness,  
    For those who keep his covenant and his decrees.

***Proverbs 2:10-11:***

“When wisdom comes into your heart and knowledge is a delight to you, then prudence will be there to watch over you, and discernment be your guardian.”

1. “Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening” (1 Sam. 3:10).
2. “And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ” (Phil. 1:9-10).
3. “But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He will glorify me, for He will take what is mine and will disclose it to you” (Jn. 16:13-14).
4. “Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised” (1Cor. 2:12-14).

## **Ignatian Insight:**

Ignatius was constantly discerning in his life. While at Loyola his aim was to outdo the saints in penance (AB14); the main aim while leaving Manresa was to have trust in God alone and to practice that trust in God alone; to have God as refuge (AB 35); while leaving Jerusalem the aim was to study and help souls (AB 50); when leaving for Paris it was to study and gather companions to help souls (AB 71); to form a religious order and founding the Society (AB 99). The movements are dynamic. In all these we see a gradual unfolding of God's plan for him as he discerned the will of God.

Discernment of Spirits underlines the Spiritual Exercises. St. Ignatius intended the Spiritual Exercises to help people make decisions grounded in their faith, whether this meant making what Ignatius calls an "election", a momentous decision or life choice or whether it simply meant checking to make sure one is heading in the right direction or deepening a call one has already embraced. Discernment of Spirits helps us to determine which actions of ours will be to the greater glory of God, and will - in the words of St. Ignatius - "help souls." May it please the supreme and divine Goodness, to give us all abundant grace, ever to know his most holy will, and perfectly to fulfil it.

## **Points to Ponder:**

1. How far does Ignatian discernment rule my thoughts, words, actions, choices, attitudes?
2. In which areas of my ministry have I found myself applying Ignatian discernment?
3. What are some of the graces I have experienced from my own process of discernment?

## **Prayers of Petition:**

*Response:* **Lord, allow your guiding spirit to enter our hearts.**

1. That all Jesuits, and we in particular, accept God's divine will to transform our communities and become pillars of strength to each

other in the pursuit of holiness and in apostolic ventures. Let us  
**℟ Lord, allow your guiding spirit to enter our hearts.**

2. Lord, in the spirit of the Exercises may we desire to discern your will and to accomplish the mission you have entrusted to us. Let us pray. **℟**
3. Lord, give us a spirit of discernment and an understanding heart to know what is good and true, and to be able to identify and reject what is false and deceptive. Let us pray. **℟**
4. Lord, tune our ears to listen to your voice, sharpen our intellect to know your will, so that we may know ourselves and our talents better as we pray, study and work. Let us pray. **℟**
5. Lord, may we have a servant's heart to be led and guided by the Holy Spirit. Through your will may we be able to read the signs of the times and show forth your love and values to our brothers and sisters. Let us pray. **℟**

### **Concluding Prayer:**

Triune God, in your providence you guided St. Ignatius to found the Society of Jesus. May his example inflame our hearts and enlighten our minds to know your will. Direct and govern us in moments of darkness and confusion; be our light, way and strength. In times of tribulation tell us what we should do. Give us the determination to do your will with love, accept all that you permit to happen to us, and adore your holy will right to the end. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. **℟: Amen.**

### **Hymn:**

Deep calls to deep  
God leads us along  
Deep within my heart I feel.

*Sch. Royal Saldhana (KHM)*

## **UAP 1.c.3 Fruits of Discernment**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Context/Composition:**

The life of the founding fathers proved the fruits of discernment in the history of the Society. This communitarian dimension of discernment marks its beginning at Montmartre, where the first companions pronounced their first vows - vows of poverty and chastity. The deliberations of the first companions in Venice offer another glimpse on the importance of group discernment in the mission of the Society. Though they differed in their ethnicity, language and temperament, they eagerly sought God's will with one mind and heart. Another instance of group discernment, which is unarguably the most important and which paved way for the founding of the Society as religious order, was the Deliberations of 1539. The topics discussed and discerned during these deliberations were whether they should remain as a group and should pledge obedience to a superior, who they will elect from among them. Thus, we see a continuous pattern of fruitful group discernment from the very beginning of the Society.

### **Hymn:**

Send forth your Spirit O Lord, that the face of the earth be renewed.

## **Readings for Reflection:** *(Any one passage could be chosen)*

### ***Acts 15:1-20:***

Council of Jerusalem accommodates Gentiles

### ***1 Cor. 2:12-16:***

“What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words. The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit. The person with the Spirit makes judgments about all things, but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments, for, ‘Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?’ But we have the mind of Christ.”

### ***Phil. 1:8-11:***

“God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus. And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ - to the glory and praise of God.”

### ***Ps 26: Declaration of Righteousness***

- L : Judge me O Lord; for I have walked in my integrity:  
I have trusted also in the Lord; therefore, I shall not slide.
- C : Examine me O lord, and prove me;  
Try my reins and my heart
- L : For your loving kindness is before my eyes:  
And I have walked in your truth.
- C : I have not sat with vain persons,  
Neither will I go in with dissemblers.

- L : I have hated the congregation of evil doers;  
And I will not sit with the wicked.
- C : I will wash my hands in innocence:  
So, will I compass your alter, O Lord:
- L : That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving,  
And tell of your wondrous works.
- C : Lord I have loved the habitation of your house,  
And the place where your honour dwells.
- L : But as for me, I will walk in my integrity:  
Redeem me, and be merciful to me.
- C : My foot stand in an even place:  
In the congregations will I bless the Lord.

### **Ignatian Insight:**

Discernment, a precious gift of Ignatius, is integral to our personal and corporate apostolic life. It begins in contemplation of God at work in our world and allows us to draw more fruit in joining our efforts to God’s designs. Discernment is what roots us in the Church in which the Spirit works and distributes his various gifts for the common good. Discernment works as the foundation for decision making by the proper authority in our way of proceeding (GC 36, d2, n4).

The fruit of all our efforts towards promoting discernment in common is a profound conversion - personal conversion as well as institutional conversion. However, it must be noted that this conversion is not from something bad to good; rather it is from good to better. This conversion does not happen overnight for it is a long, on-going process. The animating spirit of this conversion ought to be “Magis”, a divine restlessness for the greater glory of God.

### **Points for Reflection:**

1. Are we open to the promptings of the Spirit and ready to accept equally the ‘sweetness and bitterness’ of God’s will in our lives?
2. How do the signs of time provoke us to take on new roles as the fruit of discernment?

## **Prayers of Praise and Gratitude:**

*Response:* **We thank and praise you for renewing our life in your Spirit, O Lord.**

1. For Church leaders who strive for the unity and sanctity of the Church, and work with ever growing enthusiasm to transform the world. **℟**
2. For the leaders of nations who constantly discern their responsibilities in fulfilling their duties of justice and peace, in spite of difficulties, through mutual dialogue and real concern for the humanity. **℟**
3. For helping us to come together in the Spirit and binding us with bonds of love so as to grow and cherish our togetherness. **℟**
4. For all Christians who continue to grow in their attitude of sharing and caring, and remain faithful to the will of God concerning the Church and her Mission. **℟**
5. For the Church as she upholds the spirit of inclusiveness under Divine guidance and Spirit. **℟**
6. For your Son whom you sent into this world to give us eternal life, and to fill us with the spirit of unity. **℟**

## **Concluding Prayer:**

God our loving Father, bless us so that we may understand one another, see the signs of times and hear the promptings of your Spirit in all areas of our life. Enlighten our minds, inflame our hearts, and give us the courage to face the challenges of the world. Above all help us to love one another and become instruments of your mercy and compassion to all. We make our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord. **℟: Amen.**

*Sch. Francis Lobo (PUN)*

## **UAP 2.a.1 Human Dignity (Disfigured Humanity)**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Opening prayer:**

Lord Jesus you came not to be served but to serve. You came for the sinners, the poor and the outcasts, the disabled, the weak, the sick and the unwanted. You came for the least, the lost and the last of this world. Help us realize that walking with the poor is not a burden to be carried but a joyful experience to be treasured.

### **Grace:**

To become aware of our insensitivity and oppressive attitudes towards others, especially the poor, and the grace to be more sensitive and compassionate towards them.

### **Context/Composition:**

Pope Francis, on the 105<sup>th</sup> World Day of Migrants and Refugees (September 29, 2019), uses four verbs while inviting us to respond to the challenges posed by the contemporary migration crisis: welcome, protect, promote and integrate. We can also respond by avoiding wastage of food and water, and giving up our obsession with gadgets and dress, luxurious life, throw away culture, etc. Migrants, even after leaving their countries in search of a better future, continue to suffer from problems like identity crisis, cultural shock, unemployment and economic instability.

We live in a complex world marred by violent conflicts, wars that tear peoples apart, migrants and refugees being excluded from the mainstream, sexual abuse of vulnerable children and women, the marginalisation of the Adivasis and minorities, economic disparity, caste discrimination, cultural hegemony, the neglected farmers, etc. In all of these it is the poorest of the poor who pay the price. The UAPs invite us to establish peace, justice, reconciliation, equality and fraternity, and restore human dignity.

## **Scripture Reading:**

***Lk. 16:19 - 31:***

The rich man and Lazarus.

(Other texts: Lk. 12:13-21; Mt. 5:46; GC 32, d12, n261)

## **Reflection:**

Our faith demands that we treat others with respect and dignity as children of God. At times we are responsible for increasing the sufferings of the poor by our careless use of resources and our comfortable lifestyle. Let us pray for the grace that we may become aware of our materialistic attitude and identify with the poor by embracing a simpler lifestyle.

## **Questions:**

1. What has my experience of being close to the poor and the marginalized been, and what have I gained from it?
2. How can I make this closeness more effective and fruitful?
3. How can we restore their identity as children of God, made in God's image?

## **Prayers of Repentance:**

***Response: Lord, make us sensitive to the sufferings of our fellow human beings.***

1. Lord, though endowed with dignity and good nature, we are also capable of doing evil and of harming others. We often fail to

acknowledge the dignity of others and don't hesitate to hurt them.  
So we pray... ✠

2. Lord, love for you and responsibility for those around are inseparable. We have experienced your love and mercy and yet are reluctant to reach out to the poor and the needy. So we pray... ✠
3. Human trafficking is prevalent everywhere and affects the weak and the vulnerable the most. Human beings are looked upon as mere commodities. So we pray... ✠
4. Today the challenges facing us are widespread poverty and hunger, brutal oppression and discrimination, uncontrolled amassing of weapons of war, nuclear threat, etc. - all an anti-human reality. So we pray... ✠
5. Refugees suffer persecution, torture, an uncertain future and even death in their homeland. They are the most vulnerable people today. Political and religious leaders often fail to attend to these problems. So we pray... ✠
6. The selfish mentality of the corporate world, industrialists, vested interests, etc. has led to the depletion of our natural resources. This has a serious impact on farmers because of droughts, floods, unpredictable weather, etc. So we pray... ✠

### **Concluding Prayer:**

God of creation, help us to be generous to the poor who knock at our door for help and security. Let our encounter with them be an opportunity to serve and love you, and to experience you in a tangible way. Help us to heal those who are broken and neglected. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. ✠: Amen.

### **Hymn:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FtEbwNHBWzE>, Make me servant, humble and weak (Tagore's Song).

*Sch. Phaomei Gaibirei (KHM)*

## **UAP 2.a.2 Jesus the Restorer of Human Dignity**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh, God our Lord, grant us that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Introduction:**

Jesus was compassionate towards sinners, women, and children. He never kept anyone away from him. He has set us an example of how to restore human dignity. He has taught us to embrace sinners, respect women, and love children. “I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance” (Lk. 5:32). Let us follow the path our Lord and Master has shown us. Let us become instruments of reconciliation.

### **Grace:**

We ask for the grace to be more compassionate and open, to respect the dignity of others and accept them as they are.

### **Context/Composition:**

Pope Francis reminds us of the importance of the dignity of others, as children of the same God. Our tendency is to be judgmental. Today women and children are deprived of their rightful dignity. Their basic rights are violated; they are not given equal freedom in society and are often abused by male dominated society. We give too much importance to ourselves becoming more and more self-focused and self-centred. We lose respect for others, become narrow minded and have no room for forgiveness and acceptance. We have turned

our faces away from, and closed the doors to, people of other faiths and of no faith.

## **Readings for Reflection:**

### ***Mk. 2:15-17:***

As Jesus sat at dinner in Levi's house, many tax collectors and sinners were also sitting with Jesus and his disciples - for there were many who followed him. When the scribes of the Pharisees saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, they said to his disciples, "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?" When Jesus heard this, he said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I have come to call not the righteous but sinners."

The Church is called to be the house of the Father, with doors always wide open. One concrete sign of such openness is that our Church doors should always be open so that if someone comes there looking for God, he or she will not find a closed door. There are other doors that should not be closed either. Everyone can share in the life of the Church and be a part of the community. The doors of the sacraments should not be closed. This is because the sacraments are not a prize for the perfect but a powerful medicine and nourishment for the weak. These convictions have pastoral consequences that we are called to consider with prudence and boldness. Frequently, we act as arbiters of grace rather than its facilitators. But the Church is not a tollhouse; it is the house of the Father, where there is a place for everyone, with all their problems (Cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, n47).

## **Points to Ponder:**

1. How do I respect the dignity of others in society?
2. How am I integrating people who are oppressed, rejected and marginalized in the Church?

## Prayers of Petition:

*Response: Loving Father, hear our prayer.*

1. God has created us in the own image and likeness. We are called to be His children. He has given equal rights and dignity to all. Let us ask God for the grace that we may respect the dignity of others. Without being judgmental may we embrace and accept others as they are. **℟**
2. We pray for women. Many are victims of molestation, sexual, physical and domestic violence. Their rights are often taken away. We pray for the grace that society may recognise the dignity of women and begin to respect them after the example of Christ. **℟**
3. Children are gifts from God. Our responsibility is to protect and nurture them. But they have to face abuse, negligence, exploitation, genital mutilation, child marriage and other forms of harm. Let us pray that as the disciples of Jesus learnt to welcome children, we may welcome them and see them as blessings of God. **℟**
4. God has made us stewards of creation and not owners. We ask for the grace to refrain from being greedy and accumulating things, learning to use things, not misuse them. **℟**
5. We pray for the Church and for all Christians: that the Holy Spirit may enlighten and inspire us to accept all peoples; that we may open our hearts to accept sinners, as well as people of other faiths and no faith thus becoming instruments of reconciliation. **℟**

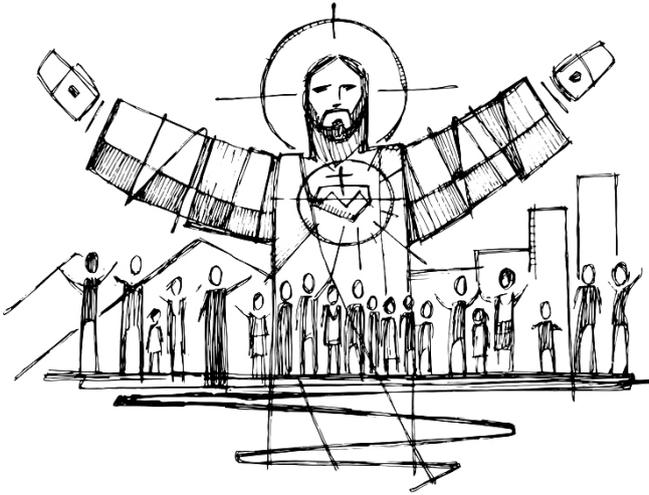
## Concluding Prayer:

Dear Lord, we thank you for creating us in your image and likeness. Make us generous and fill our heart with unconditional love for all. You loved us so much that you sent your Son to take away our sins. Grant us the grace to see others and ourselves as sacred and holy. May we always respect everyone. Give us the strength to follow the path you set before us. We make this prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **℟: Amen.**

## Hymns:

1. The world stands in need of liberation my Lord...
2. Pope's intentions for dignity: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DtVHtF9W19E>
3. Jesus gives honour, value, respect and...:<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sjTumfK9-Y4>

*Sch. Mondal Rintu (CCU)*



## **UAP 2.a.3 Rooted in Christ**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Opening Hymn:**

(Sacred Melodies: Hymn no - 62, pg. 28)

1. Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's holy name.  
Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me into life.
2. Praise the Lord, my soul...
3. Thank the Lord, my soul...

### **Grace:**

We ask for the grace to be rooted in Christ so as to bear abundant and lasting fruit.

### **Context/Composition:**

In the Third Week of the Spiritual Exercises, we contemplate the Passion of our Lord beginning with his agony in the garden of Gethsemane. Today our world has become another Gethsemane where our Lord continues to suffer in suffering humanity. The world has become more materialistic and less humane.

“The pilgrim search of Ignatius united him to Christ, led him to choose poverty with Christ poor, and to enter more deeply into the

mystery of Christ's passion and resurrection. Out of his incessant search for God's presence and will, Ignatius developed a way of proceeding. This way of proceeding is found in the pilgrimage of the Spiritual Exercises from sinner beloved and forgiven to disciple called to labour in the vineyard and to suffer with Christ; [...] Like that of Ignatius, our way of proceeding is both a pilgrimage and a labour in Christ: in his compassion, in his ceaseless desire to bring men and women to the Father's reconciliation and the Spirit's love, and in his committed care for the poor, the marginalized, and the abandoned" (GC 34, d1, n5).

## **Scripture Readings:**

### ***Jn. 15: 4-8:***

"Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my word abides in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples."

### ***Acts 3: 1-9:***

Peter heals a crippled beggar – "what I have I give you"

### ***Col. 2: 6-10:***

"Rooted and built up in Him..."

## **Points for Reflection:**

1. How do I realize my deep rootedness in Christ, in His teaching, in His love?
2. How do I see the connection between human dignity and environmental conditions?

3. Does what is happening in the world today disturb my conscience? What is my response?
4. Do I challenge myself, my companions and people outside to make the world a better place for a dignified life of every one?

## **Prayers of Praise and Gratitude:**

*Response:* **Lord, we thank and praise you.**

1. We thank and praise you Lord for being the source our Society and calling us to build our identity based on your Son and the desire to serve him. **℟**
2. We are grateful to you Lord for the various initiatives taken by the UAP (Universal Apostolic Preferences) to help us to be more relevant today in our mission, and respond to the need of the hour. **℟**
3. Lord, we pray for JRS and for all our missions, for all those who joyfully engage themselves in bringing peace, justice and harmony to this broken world. Bless them and strengthen them so that they may continue to do this work of charity with vigour and commitment. **℟**
4. Lord, in your great love you made us custodians to look after your creation. Help us to cherish and protect your creation not only for ourselves but also for future generations. **℟**

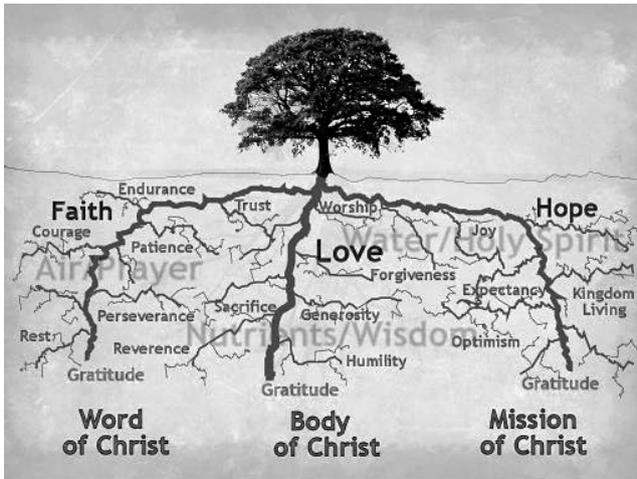
## **Relevant hymns:**

1. Kerrie Roberts – Rooted (Lyric Video) -<https://youtu.be/F9vtRgjL2c0>
2. Oceans (Where feet may fail) – Hill song United -<https://youtu.be/FBJJkiRukY>
3. Thank You – Jesus Army - <https://youtu.be/gp4N12X1jKo>

## Concluding Prayer:

God our Father, we know you love us and care for us. Continue to shower your blessings upon us and our mission. Help us to be rooted in the love of your Son and to promote human dignity, peace, justice and harmony. Keep us united with you, with humanity and with Mother Nature. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.  
✠: Amen.

*Sch. Manish Tigga (CCU)*



## **UAP 2.b.1 Greater Need for Sensitivity - To Walk with the Poor**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

To be sensitive to, and walk with, the poor.

### **Context/Composition:**

In India the poor suffer from various forms of discrimination and oppression stemming of caste, religion, class, etc. Dalits, Tribals, Untouchables are the worst affected. Rapes, abductions, lynching, violence have become common place. We have become insensitivity to all of this; have become passive bystanders. To make matters worse we end up sharing videos clips of violence against the poor via WhatsApp, etc. while cosily sitting behind closed doors.

Consumerism and the digital culture do not foster sensitivity but a selfish attitude towards the poor. Today all over the world economic, political and social forces are excluding millions of people from the benefits of development (GC34, d3, n64).The Society of Jesus calls us to come out of our comfort zones and walk with the poor. It asks us to have greater sensitivity towards the poor who are oppressed and side-lined by society.

## Scripture Reading

### ***Lk. 16:19-23:***

“There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores. The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. And in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side.”

## Reflection

Reflecting on this Gospel passage, Pope Francis warned against those who place their trust in material things. He said that trusting in vanity, pride and riches will distance us from the Lord and the poor. He also warned Christians who had an uncaring attitude and were insensitive to the poor and the homeless. He went to the extent of saying, “Damned are those who don’t care for the poor and the homeless” (Francis Effect, Pg. 40). Pope Francis is telling us to walk with the poor and the marginalized, and to fight for their rights.

## Point to Ponder:

1. Am I ready to walk with the poor?
2. Do I really feel for the sufferings of the poor?
3. In what ways am I showing my sensitivity towards the poor?

## Prayers of Repentance:

***Response: Father, forgive us and help us identify with the poor and the suffering.***

1. Heavenly Father, we ask pardon for the times when we have been insensitive to the poor in their sufferings. Give us the grace so that we may be sensitive to them. **℟**

2. God our loving Father, we repent for the times when we had failed to love the oppressed and the outcasts. Help us to love the poor as you did. **℟: Father, forgive us and help us identify with the poor and the suffering.**
3. God of the poor, we are sorry for the times when we have disrespected the poor. Help us to understand their suffering and pain, and to respect them with our whole heart. **℟**
4. God of mercy, we ask pardon for the times when we have failed to accompany and fight for the poor. Strengthen our hearts so that we may work for the welfare of the poor. **℟**

**Hymn:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pPvioAt5fq4>

Beauty for brokenness  
 Hope for despair  
 Lord, in your suffering  
 This is our prayer  
 Bread for the children  
 Justice, joy, peace  
 Sunrise to sunset  
 Your kingdom increase!

Shelter for fragile lives  
 Cures for their ills  
 Work for the craftsman  
 Trade for their skills,  
 Land for the dispossessed  
 Rights for the weak  
 Voices to plead the cause  
 Of those who can't speak.

Refuge from cruel wars  
 Havens from fear  
 Cities for sanctuary  
 Freedoms to share  
 Peace to the killing-fields  
 Scorched earth to green  
 Christ for the bitterness.  
 His cross for the pain

Friend of the weak  
 Give us compassion we pray  
 Melt our cold hearts  
 Let tears fall like rain  
 Come, change our love  
 From a spark to a flame.

Friend of the weak  
 Give us compassion we pray  
 Melt our cold hearts  
 Let tears fall like rain  
 Come, change...

## Concluding Prayer:

Ever loving Father, you have always walked with the poor with great sensitivity and love. You have never forsaken them. You have fulfilled their needs and stood by them in their sufferings and pain. Grant us your grace to be like you in our dealings with the poor. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Rz:** Amen.

*Sch. Anthony Praveen Kumar, A. (MDU)*



## **UAP 2.b.2 Jesus, Poor and Humble**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

To relish and imitate the values of Christ, poor and humble.

### **Context/Composition:**

The ministries of the Jesuits are geared towards the poor and the needy. Every Jesuit is called to work for the poor and to imitate the values of the Master. Let our lives be like that of our Lord Jesus Christ, the friend and companion of the poor.

### **Texts for Reflection**

#### ***Lk. 9:57-58 (the would-be followers of Jesus):***

As they were going along the road, someone said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.” And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.”

#### ***GC 34, d.26, n.548:***

Today, whatever our ministry, we Jesuits enter into solidarity with the poor, the marginalized and the voiceless, in order to enable

their participation in the processes that shape the society in which we all live and work. They, in their turn, teach us about our own poverty as no document can. They help us to understand the meaning of the gratuity of our ministries, giving freely what we have freely received, giving our very lives. They show us the way to inculcate Gospel values in situations where God is forgotten. Through such solidarity we become “agent of inculturation.”

### **Message of Pope Francis on the World Day of the Poor (Nov 19, 2017)**

“Little children, let us not love in word or speech, but indeed and in truth” (1 Jn. 3:18)

We are called, then, to draw near to the poor, to encounter them, to meet their gaze, to embrace them and to let them feel the warmth of love that breaks through their solitude. Their outstretched hand is also an invitation to step out of our certainties and comforts, and to acknowledge the value of poverty in itself.

Let us never forget that, for Christ’s disciples, poverty is above all a call to follow Jesus in his own poverty. It means walking behind him and beside him, a journey that leads to the beatitude of the Kingdom of heaven (Mt. 5:3; Lk. 6:20). Poverty means having a humble heart that accepts our creaturely limitations and sinfulness and thus enables us to overcome the temptation to feel omnipotent and immortal. Poverty is an interior attitude that avoids looking upon money, career and luxury as our goal in life and the condition for our happiness. Poverty instead creates the conditions for freely shouldering our personal and social responsibilities, despite our limitations, with trust in God’s closeness and the support of his grace. Poverty, understood in this way, is the yardstick that allows us to judge how best to use material goods and to build relationships that are neither selfish nor possessive (cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church, Nos. 25-45).

*(Or)*

## ***Thirumanthiram, by Thirumoolar. (Tamil Bhakti literature)***

Heavenly treasure will give you victory over death.

People hear me! Reflect and be sure that the treasures of the world are impermanent. Do not let your mind be confused about this truth. Even if your treasure mounds up and hits you like the flood in a river, do not be swayed by its current. Do not change your heart regarding this truth. Leave the worldly treasures and seek heavenly ones. That will be only thing that will benefit you when you are near death.

**Song:** Whatsoever you do (OR) Ps. 146:6-10

### **Points to Ponder:**

1. Are we free and joyful in living our vow of poverty?
2. Do people respect and accept our practice of poverty and admire it?
3. Do we try to imitate Christ by living a simple life as the poor do?
4. What is our level of humility; our personal love for Christ; freedom from detachment; our practise of personal poverty?

### **Prayers of Petition:**

*Response:* **Lord, hear our prayer**

1. Lord Jesus, we pray for every Jesuit that we may stand in solidarity and act with justice to bring healing, reconciliation, fairness and peace in the world. May we see your face in the poor, the marginalized, and the voiceless. **✠**
2. God of love give us strength to serve the poor with compassion and kindness. Grant that we may work together with respect and understanding. **✠**
3. Lord Jesus we pray for Church leaders that they may be strengthened by the Holy Spirit in their service to the poor and the needy. Give them a deep sense of your presence in the world. **✠**

4. Lord our Good Shepherd we pray for our political leaders. Give them a discerning heart, bold faith and true wisdom to serve your people. Help them to be generous and large hearted towards the poor and the needy. ✠

### **Concluding Prayer:**

God of love, open our eyes to see you, our ears to listen to your words carefully, our minds to know you, our hands to serve you more generously, and hearts to love you more deeply in the poor. Help us to imitate the values of our Lord Jesus Christ. May we serve the poor with humility. We ask this through our Lord and Master Jesus. ✠: Amen.

*Sch. Vivekraj Amulraj (CEN)*



## **UAP 2.b.3 In Solidarity with the Poor**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

To cherish the joy of walking in solidarity with the poor by attuning our hearts and the hearts of the powerful to the needs of the poor.

### **Context/Composition:**

The widening gap between the rich and the poor is a defining challenge in the contemporary world. Despite many initiatives taken to reduce poverty and inequalities, and improving health and education of the less privileged, there are glaring disparities that stare us in the face. Millions of people are still dispossessed, deprived of a decent living, basic needs and rights. These are “signs not only of a profound lack of fraternity, but also of an absence of a culture of solidarity. New ideologies, characterized by rampant individualism, egocentrism and materialistic, consumerism weaken social bonds, fuelling that ‘throw away’ mentality which leads to contempt for, and the abandonment of the weakest and those considered ‘useless’. In this way human coexistence increasingly tends to resemble a mere “do *ut des*” (= I give, so that you may give) which is both pragmatic and selfish” (Message of Pope Francis for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace, 2014).

## **Readings:**

### ***Acts 4: 32-37:***

Today, whatever our ministry, we Jesuits enter into solidarity with the poor, the marginalized and the voiceless, in order to enable their participation in the processes that shape the society in which we all live and work. They, in turn, teach us about our own poverty as no document can. They help us to understand the meaning of the gratuity of our ministries, giving freely what we have freely received, giving our very lives. They show us the way to inculcate Gospel values in situations where God is forgotten. Through such solidarity we become “agents of inculturation” (GC34: # 547-548).

## **Points for Reflection:**

Ignatius and his followers began their preaching in poverty. They worked with the powerful and the powerless, with princes, kings, and bishops, but also with the women of the street and with the victims of the plague. They linked their ministry to the powerful with the needs of the powerless.

1. Are we disturbed by the growing gap between the rich and the poor? If so, in what way can we link the powerless with the powerful?
2. Can we restructure the system in our society or instil social ethics that are concerned with the suffering of the poor?
3. What are the concrete steps that we can take to walk in solidarity with the poor?

## **Prayers of Petition:**

***Response: Lord, help us to walk in solidarity with the poor in their pain and joys.***

1. St. Alberto Hurtado was a disciple of Christ who served and accompanied the poor both personally and structurally. May the Lord instil in us a renewed sense in the spirit so that we build a structure of “common good” that is in line with God’s vision. ✠

2. St. Mother Teresa of Kolkata chose to nurse the poor, suffer humiliation in the desire to quench the thirst of Christ painted in the faces of the poor she encountered. Today millions are still being ignored and despised as the gap between the rich and the poor keeps widening. May the Lord touch the hearts of those who look for gain at the expense of the poor and instead uplift those in need. **℟ Lord, help us to walk in solidarity with the poor in their pain and joys.**
3. St. Oscar Romero stood in solidarity with the poor, even to the point of sacrificing his life for them. May his spirit enkindle our hearts and make us generous and courageous in standing for the rights of the poor - dignity, decent work and adequate wages. **℟**
4. There are positive signs of solidarity among the poor as they continue in their efforts to support one another, and their silent demonstrations in public fighting for their rights in the face of utter indifference and inefficiency of the authorities. May God inspire us to mobilize and convince the authorities to frame policies in favour of the poor. **℟**
5. Solidarity with the poor demands of us that we go beyond mere conceptual thinking. It invites us to work towards a comprehensive collective solidarity that includes the rich, the corporate world and the authorities in fulfilling the needs of the poor. May the Lord who is the master of both the rich and the poor, enlighten all to recognize that everyone has the right to a decent and secure life. **℟**

### **Concluding Prayer:**

O Lord, you live today in the poor, the sick, the dispossessed and people thrown out of their slums. You huddle under bridges, in so many children who lack someone to call father, who have been deprived for many years of a mother's kiss (St Alberto Hurtado-modified). Enlighten us so that we may know our place in this world as stewards and keepers of our brothers and sisters. Help us to be in solidarity with you by walking in solidarity with those who are marginalized. Enlighten those who possess power and wealth that

they may avoid the sin of indifference. Guide and inspire them to share what they have with those who are deprived of the bare necessities of life. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Rx**: Amen.

### **Hymn(s):**

1. And they'll know we are Christians
2. The world stands in need of liberation
3. Were you there when they crucified my Lord
4. Whatsoever you do
5. Christ be our light
6. Make me a channel
7. The Magnificat

*Sch. Dkhar Goldenstar (KHM)*



## **UAP 2.c.1 Justice of the ‘World’**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

Insight into the deceits of the evil leader, and help to guard myself against them; and further, insight into the genuine life which the supreme and truthful commander sets forth and grace to imitate him” (Sp. Ex. # 139).

### **Context/Composition:**

“Imagine the leader of all the enemy in that great plain of Babylon. He is seated on a throne of fire and smoke, in aspect horrible and terrifying” (Sp. Ex.# 140).

### **Real life:**

“A terminally ill woman whose husband is no more; she has two children, is living in a rented house unable to pay the rent of Rs.1500/- on time. The house owner entered their home. He destroyed the few things she had, dragged her son to the police station and lodged a complaint against the son saying that he was attacked by the son when he went to collect the house rent. The police beat up the son for three days. The mother had to seek help of her sister, who sold her TV, paid the house rent and managed to bail out the son. She has to find a lawyer and find money to fight the case. The life of the son is tarnished.” The one who narrated the incident to me

asked the question, “How can a human being do this to another?” I had no answer.

[As a help to go deeper into the context the following could be used: PPT on Holocaust; Trailer of movie SELMA; Tell me Why? - song by Declan Galbraith cf. YouTube]

## **Reading:**

***Amos: 2:6-8; 5:10-13; 8:4-8:***

*Pope’s aide takes 33 refugees to Rome after visit to ‘shameful’ Lesbos camp (Angela Giuffrida in Rome, reported by The Guardian)*

An aide to Pope Francis has urged Catholic churches across Europe to open their doors to refugees after bringing 33 people to Rome from overcrowded, squalid camps on the Greek island of Lesbos. Speaking on his return from a visit to the camps, Cardinal Konrad Krajewski, the Vatican’s almoner, condemned the EU’s handling of the refugee situation, saying that “animals live better in Europe.” The 33 refugees, among them families from Cameroon, Afghanistan and Togo, arrived in Rome on Wednesday night and will be hosted by the Vatican and the Sant’ Egidio charity. “We have the money, let’s begin with ourselves... let’s open our rectories, convents and monasteries to at least one family each from the Lesbos refugee camps so that we can empty them all,” Krajewski said after landing at Fiumicino airport in Rome with the group from Lesbos. “I have seen terrible situations in the camps.”

The population in the island’s camps has increased from 7,000 in May to more than 15,000, of whom 800 are unaccompanied children, Krajewski said. “There is no hope for them stuck in Greece, where they are living in dramatic conditions. This is a problem for Europe and is shameful.”

## **Points for Examen:**

1. The times we have been deaf to the cry of the poor.
2. The times we have not expressed solidarity with those who are oppressed.

3. The times we have not opened our institutions and communities to the needy.
4. The times we have not networked with people of goodwill in acting for the poor.
5. Our failure to create a culture of inclusiveness, gender equality, and ethnic harmony.
6. Our failure to convert ourselves from caste/ethnic prejudices
7. Inflicting covert violence through our indifference to the needs of the marginalized.
8. Not taking up a simple lifestyle so as to witness to the vow of poverty.
9. Our failure to protect the resources of Mother Earth.

### **Prayers of Repentance:**

*Response:* **Lord, renew and strengthen our hearts to be lovers of justice.**

1. “The joys and the hopes, the grief and the anxieties of the people of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted: these are the joys and hopes, the grief and anxieties of the followers of Christ.” As shepherds of the Church and its administration we have failed to be true bearers of the new vision of the Church. ✠
2. At the start of the new millennia world leaders committed themselves for sustainable developmental goals. May the Holy Spirit trouble their conscience about their failures in creating an atmosphere of true justice and peace among nations. ✠
3. The world has witnessed two world wars, genocides and ethnic cleansings in different continents. Nations, tribes and races still give into the oppressive ways of violence towards those who are vulnerable. ✠
4. The pursuit of “throw away culture” has destroyed nature and the ecosystem which supports Mother Earth. Those who are responsible for sustainable development are deaf to the creative ways which will conserve and promote human and natural habitat. ✠

5. Nature has given us enough to sustain the needs of the world. As a human community we have yielded to unbridled ways of exploiting human and natural resources, making this planet non-liveable for future generations. ❧
6. God created the human family in his image and likeness. Being part of a male dominated society, we too have the tendency to perpetrate violence on women – seeing them as ‘commodity for use and abuse’. ❧
7. The pursuit of a hedonistic culture has not spared little children to whom the kingdom of heaven belongs. We have been indifferent and have failed to protect the little ones, and have not raised our voice against those who indulge in such harm to children. ❧

**Concluding Prayer:** (Come Holy Spirit, Fr. Pedro Arrupe SJ)

Give me, Lord  
 What you gave to the Prophets:  
 Even if my craven soul protests,  
 Force me to speak...  
 The word that came to them was  
 Not their own word but yours,  
 Of your Spirit  
 Sent to them not only  
 To create a new personality for service  
 But also, to explain its sense and secrets...  
 Give me  
 That Spirit scrutinizes all,  
 Inspires all, teaches all,  
 That will strengthen me  
 To support what I am not able to support.  
 Give me  
 That Spirit that transformed  
 The weak Galilean fishermen  
 Into the pillars of your Church and into Apostles  
 Who gave in the holocaust of their lives  
 The supreme testimony  
 Of their love for their brothers.

*Fr. Vincent Crasta (KAR)*

## **UAP 2.c.2 Jesus Reinterpreting/Re-enforcing Justice**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

Lord, give me the heart and mind to enter into the new and right perspectives so that I see the entire world with the eyes of justice which enforce harmony in the world.

### **Context/Composition:**

1. Pope Francis says, “We are living at a historical stage of change in which the soul of our peoples is at stake, a time of crisis in which there is the paradox: on the one hand, phenomenal normative development, on the other side a deterioration in the effective enjoyment of globally consecrated rights” (Casina Pio IV – Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, Vatican City Tuesday, June 4, 2019).
2. India is the second most populous country after China with about 1.2 billion people and is the seventh largest country in the world. Only a small percentage of the Indian population has benefited from this impressive economic boom so far, as the majority of people in India are still living in abject poverty. More than 800 million people in India are considered poor. Most of them live in the countryside and keep afloat with odd jobs. (Poverty in India: Facts and Figures on The Daily Struggle for Survival, <https://www.soschildrensvillages.ca/news/poverty-in-india-602>).

## Readings for Reflection:

### *Mt 20:1-16 – The labourers in the vineyard*

Address of Pope Francis to the National Association of Magistrates on Feb. 9, 2019

1. We live in a context afflicted by tensions and ruptures, which risk weakening the social fabric itself and weaken the civic awareness of many, with a consequent withdrawal into the private sector that often generates disinterest and becomes a fertile ground for illegality. The claim to a range of rights, up to those of the third and fourth generation connected to the new technologies, is often flanked by a limited perception of one's own duties and a widespread lack of sensibility towards the primary rights of many, indeed multitudes of people. For these reasons, it is necessary to reaffirm with constancy and determination, in attitudes and in practice, the primary value of justice, indispensable for the correct functioning of any area of public life and so that every person may lead a serene life.
2. Philosophical tradition presents justice as a cardinal virtue, the quintessential cardinal virtue, since the others also contribute towards its realization: prudence, which helps to apply the general principles of justice to specific situations; fortitude and temperance, which perfect its fulfilment.
3. And it is a cardinal value as it indicates the right direction and, like a pivot, it is also a point of support and junction. Without justice, all social life is obstructed, like a door that can no longer open, or that ends up grinding and creaking in a confused movement. Therefore, all the positive energies present in the social body must contribute to the attainment of justice, because in fulfilling the task of rendering to each person what is rightfully his, it is the main requirement for the achievement of peace.

## Points to Ponder

1. Is my justice towards the poor capable of touching the very core of their lives? How?

2. Am I cultivating peace among the people? How?
3. Am I trying to boost my own ego somehow in the name of social justice?

### **Prayers of Petition:**

*Response:* **Lord, enable us to open our eyes to see your teachings.**

1. At a time when so often the truth is falsified, and we are almost overwhelmed by a whirlwind of fleeting information, it is necessary that we are the first to affirm the superiority of reality over idea. In fact, “realities simply are, whereas ideas are worked out” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 231,233). ✠
2. Jesuits are called to be like Jesus. “May our commitment to ascertaining the reality of the facts, even if made more difficult by the amount of work entrusted to us, always therefore be punctual, accurately reported, based on an in-depth study and on a continuous effort to remain up-to-date” (Pope Francis). ✠
3. “Justice is a virtue, that is, an inner robe worn by the subject, not an occasional dress or one to be worn for events, but a robe that must always be worn, so that it covers and envelops you, influencing not only concrete decisions but also intentions and purposes” (Pope Francis). ✠
4. “Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Mt 5: 3). “The poor in spirit are those who have assumed the sentiments and attitude of the poor who in their condition do not rebel, but know how to be humble, docile, and open to the grace of God” (Pope Francis). Give us the right attitudes so that we see you in the poor. ✠

### **Hymn:**

Blest are they who are poor in spirit  
 Theirs is the kingdom of God.  
 Blest are they, full of sorrow,  
 They shall be consoled.

Rejoice and be glad!  
Blessed are you, holy are you!  
Rejoice and be glad!  
Yours is the kingdom of God!

Blest are they, the lowly ones  
They shall inherit the earth.  
Blest are they who hunger and thirst,  
They shall have their fill.

Blest are they, who show mercy;  
Mercy shall be theirs.  
Blest are they, the pure of heart,  
They shall see God!

Blest are they... <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S4jCssh MK3E>

### **Concluding Prayer:**

God our Father, give us the heart and mind to understand that the call, “the option for those who are least, those whom society discards” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 195), is a priority that Christ’s followers are called to pursue, so as not to harm the Church’s credibility but give real hope to many of our vulnerable brothers and sisters. We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord. **Rx:** Amen.

*Fr. Midhun J. Francis, (KER)*



## **UAP 2.c.3 Holistic Justice of the Kingdom**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

To strive joyfully with the spirit of Jesus for the mission of justice and the Kingdom in today's unjust world.

### **Context/Composition:**

We live in the fragmented context of our motherland that is facing a grave crisis due to the new policies that go against the values enshrined in the Indian Constitution. Statements of hatred, Hindutva fundamentalism, the saffronisation of the education system, orchestrated attacks on Dalits and minorities, assaulting and lynching Dalits and Muslims due to cow politics, the denial of freedom of expression, depriving the Dalits and the Tribals of their land rights, infiltration of the RSS into the Judiciary, the Bureaucracy, the Army, uprooting of Tribals from their land through new projects like 'Animal Corridor', 'Industrial Corridor' and 'Land Bank' and strategically depriving them of their indigenous status and rights, and the brutal killing of journalists and human rights activists are some examples of the dangerous policies that have shaken the very foundation of our nation. The Lord has heard the cry of his people. He asks each of us today, 'Whom shall I send?' and 'Who will go for me?'

## **Readings for Reflection:**

### ***Lk. 1:46-55:***

“My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour; for he looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty; He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

## **Insight from Pope Francis:**

Pope Francis, in the ‘World Meetings of Popular Movements’ held in California, minced no words saying, “Sooner or later, the moral blindness of this indifference comes to light, like when a mirage dissipates. The wounds are there, they are a reality. The unemployment is real, the violence is real, the corruption is real, the identity crisis is real, the gutting of democracies is real. The system’s gangrene cannot be whitewashed forever because sooner or later the stench becomes too strong; and when it can no longer be denied, the same power that spawned this state of affairs sets about manipulating fear, insecurity, quarrels, and even people’s justified indignation, in order to shift the responsibility for all these ills onto a “non-neighbour”. I am not speaking of anyone in particular, I am speaking of a social and political process that flourishes in many parts of the world and poses a grave danger for humanity. Jesus teaches us a different path. Do not classify others in order to see who is a neighbour and who is not. You can become neighbour to whomever you meet in need, and you will do so if you have compassion in your heart. That is to say, if you have that capacity to suffer with someone else. You must become a Samaritan. And then also become like the innkeeper at the end of the parable to whom the Samaritan entrusts the person who is suffering. Who is this innkeeper? It is

the Church, the Christian community, people of compassion and solidarity, social organizations. It is us, it is you, to whom the Lord Jesus daily entrusts those who are afflicted in body and spirit, so that we can continue pouring out all of his immeasurable mercy and salvation upon them. Here are the roots of the authentic humanity that resists the dehumanization that wears the livery of indifference, hypocrisy, or intolerance.”

### **Personal Reflection:**

1. What has been my experience of challenging the dehumanizing forces?
2. What has been my experience of being close to the poor and the marginalized?
3. What have I gained from it? How can I make this closeness more effective and fruitful?
4. How do I experience my apostolate as a mission of justice and reconciliation?

### **Prayers of Praise and Gratitude:**

*Response:* **Lord, as we praise and thank you, inspire us to involve more in the mission of justice.**

1. We thank and praise the Lord for the gift and charism of the Society of Jesus which is active in situations of injustice. Let us pray earnestly that we may receive the strength of the spirit that the Lord possessed when he challenged the unjust structures of the Jewish society of his time to bring about the justice of the Kingdom. **℟**
2. Pope Francis categorically calls every disciple of Jesus to say “no” to an economy of exclusion; “no” to the new idolatry of money; “no” to a financial system which rules rather than serves; “no” to the inequality that spawns violence. We pray that we may be involved in the inclusion of the poor in society. **℟**
3. The dignity of the human person and the common good rank higher than the comfort of those who refuse to renounce their

privileges. When these values are threatened, a prophetic voice must be raised. Let us pray that we may be prophets of God's justice in our society. ✠

4. The lives and martyrdom of the Jesuits murdered El Salvador has significantly influenced the Ignatian family throughout the world. Let us pray that Jesuit institutions will re-define what it is to be universities, high schools, parishes, mission stations, etc. ✠

### Hymn:

1. Where the mind is without fear...
2. I the Lord of sea and sky...

### Concluding Prayer:

O Lord, open my eyes that I may see the needs of others;  
Open my ears that I may hear their cries;  
Open my heart so that they need not be without succour;  
Let me not be afraid to defend the weak because of the anger of the strong,  
Nor be afraid to defend the poor because of the anger of the rich.  
Show me where love and hope and faith are needed,  
And use me to bring them to those places.  
And so, open my eyes and my ears  
That I may be able to do works of justice for thee in my life.  
✠: Amen.

*Fr. Martin Kumar G. (AND)*



## **UAP 3.a.1 Shattered Dreams**

### **Opening song:**

I have a dream

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

We ask for the grace of a repentant heart for not helping the youth to dream and for being cold-hearted in the face of the shattered dreams of the youth.

### **Context/Composition:**

Today's youth have dreams - fairest, rarest and brighter. They embrace their dreams whether influenced by peers or by their experience of the social, political and economic factors around. However, some of the youth are not motivated to achieve their dreams if they do not match with family or social expectations. Sometimes their dreams are shattered because of a lack of proper self-identity, of falling into bad company, substance abuse and excessive use of social media. These and many factors hinder the youth and they settle for the mediocre or even less. In this competitive world where the money, pride, power, arrogance and violence rule, the youth have lost the ability to dream big. They feel they are left alone to pursue their dreams.

## Scripture Passages:

Mt. 19:16–30; Mk. 10:17–31; Lk. 18:18–30.

## Reflection:

Gloria said “I had dreamt of becoming an engineer. But I come from a poor family. So I thought of giving it up, going back to where I was before, and doing the things I used to do. After that I found no strength in myself, in my family, and in all those around me. I even ended up losing faith in myself.” She continued sharing about how her dreams were shattered and her life took a turn for the worse.

This is what we see in the Gospel. The rich young man came to Jesus. He wanted to enter into eternal life. But he could not realise his dream because of the monetary obstacle in his way. His possessions became a block in following Christ. He went away sad. Pope Francis says, “Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of our dreams; let us not deprive ourselves of the newness that the Lord wants to give us. You will encounter many, many unexpected twists and turns in life, but it is important to face them and find creative ways of turning them into opportunities. But never alone! No one can fight alone” (Cf. *Christus Vivit* #17). The youth of today not only need wake up but also join hands to light up one another’s lamp of imagination - dreams.

## Points for Reflection:

1. What are the factors that shatter the dreams of the youth in our mission today?
2. And how can we repent for the shattered dreams?
3. How can we rework our dreams so that those of the youth are not shattered?
4. What are your dreams for the youth who feel helpless when their dreams are unfulfilled?

(Pause)

## Prayers of Repentance:

*Response:* **Pardon us Lord for shattering the dreams of our youth.**

1. Dear Lord, today, many youths feel that their dreams are shattered because of the unhealthy surroundings around - drugs, unhealthy relationships, confused identity, and overuse of social media. Pardon us for not showing them the way towards a new life and new dreams. ✠
2. Shattered dreams produce excruciating pain in the youth. Sometimes it is so extreme that they are afraid and go into depression in life. Lord, we ask your pardon for not listening to the youth individually and collectively in our mission. ✠
3. God our Loving father, some cherished dreams will shatter, and the feeling that you could have helped fulfil those dreams pushes us into a terrible battle with you. For this we ask you to forgive us. ✠
4. Lord Jesus, you dreamt of creating a new society based on the values of the Kingdom. We ask your pardon for not helping our youth in our mission based on your Kingdom values. ✠
5. Lord we pray for our local youth that they flood the places where they live with joy and enthusiasm that comes from the Gospel. ✠

## Hymns:

1. God as a dream: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N7ZaidyuJSI>
2. Shattered dream: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_YrWoEvdVEM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_YrWoEvdVEM)

## Concluding Prayer:

Lord Jesus, you said “I am the way, the truth and the light.” We ask your pardon for the social upheaval around. Many youths feel that they are left alone with their shattered dreams and problems.

They suffer as no one seems to listen to their inner cry; no one shows them the right path towards reframing their dreams. Lord, help us, as Jesuits, to walk with the youth in uniting them with your dream of the Kingdom of God. Walk with us and help us blaze new trails of discipleship as we accompany our youth and lead them closer to you. We make this prayer to you who lives and reigns forever and ever. ✠: Amen.

*Sch. Royston Pinto (KAR)*



## **UAP 3.a.2 Jesus - The Pulse of the Young World**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

That we may be open to see the youthful energy of the presence of Christ and see new hope for a better world.

### **Context/Composition:**

We are living at a time which is both exciting and agonizing. The times are exciting because life today is generally characterized by greater opportunities, sharing of knowledge, growing influence of science and technology, connectivity, networking, economic growth, development in living standards, spiritual quest and much more. The present day is also agonizingly marred by individualism, secularism, lopsided growth, communalism, biased news, superficiality, consumerism and waste, violence, growing stress of living, haste, injustice, etc. The youth today face the push and the pull of conflicting ideas and notions, values and options. The paths before them are varied and can direct their destinies towards unimagined and unexpected outcomes. The youth need credible vision for life and real role models who will shed light on their paths as they go through life.

## Passages for Reflection:

***Jn. 12:20-26 (Some Greeks wish to see Jesus):***

***Christus Vivit (nn. 13 and 14):*** the post-synodal exhortation of Pope Francis to young people and to the entire people of God:

Jesus, himself eternally young, wants to give us hearts that are ever young. God's word asks us to "cast out the old leaven that you may be fresh dough" (1 Cor. 5:7). St. Paul invites us to strip ourselves of the "old self" and to put on a "young" self (Col 3:9-10). In explaining what it means to put on that youthfulness "which is being renewed", he mentions "compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving each other if anyone has a complaint against another" (Col 3:12-13). In a word, being truly youthful means having a heart capable of loving whereas everything that separates us from others makes the soul grow old. And so, he concludes: "Above all, clothe yourselves with love which binds everything together in perfect harmony" (Col. 3:14).

Let us also keep in mind that Jesus had no use for adults who look down on the young or lord it over them. On the contrary, he insisted that "the greatest among you must become like the youngest" (Lk. 22:26). For him age did not establish privileges, and being young did not imply lesser worth or dignity.

## Points for reflection:

1. In what ways do I perceive the presence of Jesus in the young people I interact with?
2. How open am I in trying to interact with the youth and understand their pulse?
3. What is the degree of my enthusiasm in communicating the life, message and example of Jesus Christ to the youth?

## Prayers of Petition:

***Response: Lord, fill us with your youthful spirit.***

1. Lord we pray that in our apostolate or youth ministry we may not be deaf to your call and that we may march ahead helping the

youth to know you more clearly, to love you more dearly and to follow you more closely. ✠

2. For Christian youth who need real life examples to direct their lives in the right path, we pray for your light that we may offer them the riches of the Scripture and tradition in creative and intelligible ways. ✠
3. Lord, give us the spirit of generosity and availability, so that we may never look down upon the youth or get disheartened by our failures in reaching out to them. ✠
4. Lord we pray that we may have the youthful audacity and generosity and be ready and diligent to inspire, motivate and challenge the youth to imbibe the spirit of the *Magis* in their lives. ✠
5. Lord, make us joyful messengers of hope and encouragement to the many young people who are going through difficult times. ✠
6. Lord, help us realize that to be true shepherds with the ‘smell of the sheep’ we need to accompany the youth and partake in their laughter and cries, smiles and sighs. ✠

### **Hymn (Video):**

We are youth for Christ - [https://youtu.be/fg3MqpNt\\_WA](https://youtu.be/fg3MqpNt_WA)

### **Concluding Prayer:**

Having heard your call to follow you, O Lord, we set forth on our mission in leading and guiding the youth to imitate you. Teach us how to touch their lives and help them reach their dreams and aspirations. Help us to imitate you more genuinely so that we may guide the youth more effectively by our deeds rather than mere words. We make this prayer in your holy name. ✠: Amen.

*Sch. Praveen Martis (KAR)*

## **UAP 3.a.3 Persevering in Hope - Being a Bearer of Christ's Hope to Others**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

To accompany the young on their journey towards a hope-filled future so that they become bearers of Christ's hope to others.

### **Context/Composition:**

Youngsters have two main tasks today: 1) to share their life with others and form meaningful relationships and, 2) to be productive and persevere in hope. Today's youth are victims of a culture of death. Life is negated by the forces of death- violence, crime, corruption, slavery, pollution, exploitation and a horde of other vices! The youth are shapers of the future. But they are easily prone to dejection when things don't go their way. It is here that as followers of St. Ignatius we are called to accompany the young and fill them with hope by making them find God in all things. Perhaps no other ministry is so much in touch with today's culture as that of accompanying our youth.

### **Scripture Readings:**

#### ***Lk. 24:32:***

“Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?”

**Lk. 3:22:**

“You are my beloved child”

**Hos. 11:4; Is. 43:4**

### **Reflection:**

One of the most touching stories in the New Testament the story of the two disciples moving from Jerusalem towards Emmaus. The Lord joins them incognito. Their journey together culminates in their returning to Jerusalem fully fired with zeal to proclaim that they had seen the Risen Lord and that He is alive. The two disciples are transformed into messengers of the good news of hope and fulfilment of the promise of their Master. The Lord becomes a catalyst in this dynamic process. He does this by accompanying them, lighting up their steps lest they fall!

Sometimes we lack hope and become discouraged by the challenges and trials of life. With the Psalmist we too say: “Why am I discouraged? Why so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again – my saviour and my God!” “So, I pray that God, who gives you hope will keep you happy and full of peace as you believe in Him. May you overflow with hope through the power of the Holy Spirit” (Rom 15:13).

### **Points to Ponder:**

1. Am I attuned to the burning hope that the Scriptures churn in my heart?
2. Am I vigilant to the hope-filled presence of people who accompany me and do I have the audacity to invite them to dine with me?
3. When I encounter Christ, I rush to proclaim the good news to the afflicted?
4. When I am in troubled waters and discouraged, am I attentive to the Lord whom I encounter in my daily life?

## Prayers of Praise and Gratitude:

“Hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us” (Rom 5:5). We firmly believe that Jesus Christ is the Lord of hope (Rom 15:13). Placing our confidence in the Lord we come before him to thank and praise him.

*Response: Lord, we thank and praise you.*

1. Dear Lord, we thank you for opening our hearts to understand the young in all their complexity and diversity. Thank you for helping us accompany them as you accompanied the disciples walking to Emmaus. **℟**
2. Dear Lord, we thank you for giving us the grace to believe in our potential and that of the youth to collaborate in the mission of building your kingdom here on earth. **℟**
3. Dear Lord, we thank you for enlightening the youth who are filled with a renewed hope of doing better in life; taking new risks in life, having new visions and dreams with innovative skills for a brighter and better future. We pray that you may help them spread hope among others. **℟**
4. Dear Lord, we thank you for the gift of young people - full of energy, vitality and zest for life. Thank you, Lord, for the gift of hope you have given them which keeps them moving even in times of despair and rejection. **℟**

## Hymns:

Carry your candle (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EHm70Hv6gFI>)

This little light of mine (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vofUBWT8GIU>)

## Concluding Prayer:

Loving Father, Creator of all things, you are the master of this universe. Thank you for kindling a fire in the hearts of the youth to do your will and carry on your mission on this earth. Help us to be connected to you so that through you we may help the youth to be bearers of your hope in this broken world. We make our prayer through Christ our Lord. **Rz**: Amen.

Image depicting the theme

*Sch. Menoy D'Souza (GOA)*



## UAP 3.b.1 Prayer on Fear of the Unknown

### Preparatory Prayer:

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### Grace:

To realize the causes of the fear of the unknown that hinders us from accompanying the youth, and to repent for those occasions and attitudes.

### Context/Composition:

“The Church should not be excessively caught up in herself but instead, reflect Jesus Christ. This means humbly acknowledging that some things concretely need to change, and if that is to happen, she needs to appreciate the vision and also the criticism of young people (39). ... Although many young people are happy to see a Church that is humble yet confident in her gifts and capable of offering fair and fraternal criticism, others want a Church that listens more, that does more than simply condemn the world. They do not want to see a Church that is silent and afraid to speak, but neither one that is always battling obsessively over two or three issues...” (*Christus Vivit*, nn. 39 & 40).

### Readings:

1. *Mt. 14: 22-33*: Peter’s faith, and doubt, while walking on the water.

2. Homily of Fr. Bruno Cadoré, OP, on the opening day of GC36, p. 129.

### **Reflection:**

The causes of the fear of the unknown could be of lack of faith in God and in the process of becoming of the other; lack of humility to accept the failures on the path of the greater mission of countering worldly values; lack of willingness to associate with those who toil with the greater end in mind, etc.

### **Points to Ponder:**

1. What is stronger in my life - faith in the Unseen God or the fear of the unknown?
2. Am I able to identify the fears I have? If so, what are they?
3. How do I feel upon discovering the fears of unknown in my life, and on helping others identify them?

### **Prayers of Repentance:**

*Response:* **Lord, graciously purify our motives and grant us zeal for the apostolate.**

1. “The end of the Society is to devote itself with God’s grace not only to the salvation and perfection of the members’ own souls, but also with that same grace to labour strenuously in giving aid toward the salvation and perfection of the souls of their neighbours” [General Examen, n. 3]. Lord we acknowledge our failure in showing an interest in others, especially the youth, and in showing them the right way. **℟**
2. While addressing the delegates of the GC 36, Pope Francis pointed out that “The Society initiates processes and leaves spaces.” Lord we recollect the moments of role reversals in our way of living because of our fear of the unknown, and our lack of love. **℟**

3. St. Paul instructs “Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord” (Rom. 12:11). Due to our fear of unknown we have flagged in zeal and in service. ✠
4. St. Paul reminds Timothy that even “if we are faithless, he remains faithful – for he cannot deny himself” (2 Tim. 2:13). There are times we have been faithless in spite of His faithfulness. ✠

### **Concluding Prayer:**

Merciful God we are afraid of the unknown. The world is in danger with spiritual values decreasing, relationships breaking among humans and with Mother Earth. We are afraid of what might happen next. Make us aware of our limitations. Give us your grace to understand your mysteries. Purify us, strengthen us, and keep us united with you. We make this prayer through Jesus Christ our Lord. ✠: Amen.

*Fr. Augustine Kisku (PAT)*



## **UAP 3.b.2 Hope-Filled Resilience**

“I can do all things through him who strengthens me” (Phil. 4:13)

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

We ask for the grace to become resilient and embrace a hope-filled future.

### **Hymn:**

Shepherd me O God (Or) Recite Ps. 27:1-14.

### **Context/Composition:**

The fragmented reality young people face is that the numbers reveal to us that there is an abundance of youthful energy available at hand with the power to bring change and give hope to our hope-seeking nation and the Church. However, in the midst of a throw-away culture, globalization, indifference, technocracy, and a fast-moving world the youth are confused about what will give them lasting happiness. Pope Francis says that “Young people, most of whom are poor, face enormous challenges in our world today, including reduced job opportunities, economic instability, increased political violence, multiple forms of discrimination, progressive degradation of the environment, and other ills, all of which make it difficult for them to find meaning in their lives and to draw closer

to God.”Hence, knowing the challenges they face and accompanying them while they face those uncertainties with resilience is the need of the hour.

## **Readings:**

### **1. Rom. 5:2b-5**

### **2. Additional Reading:**

**An excerpt from *Christus Vivit*, (nn. 139-141):** Sometime ago, a friend asked me what I see in a young person. My response was that “I see someone who is searching for his own path, who wants to fly on his two feet, who faces the world and looks at the horizon with eyes full of the future, full of hope as well as illusions. A young person stands on two feet as adults do, but unlike adults, whose feet are parallel, he always has one foot forward, ready to set out, to spring ahead - always racing onward. To talk about young people is to talk about promise and to talk about joy. Young people have so much strength; they are able to look ahead with hope. A young person is a promise of life that implies a certain degree of tenacity. He is foolish enough to delude himself, and resilient enough to recover from that delusion.”

But opposed to these hopes and dreams that generate decisions, there is always the temptation to complain or give up. “When everything seems to be standing still and stagnant, when our personal issues trouble us, and social problems do not meet with the right responses, it does no good to give up. Jesus is the way: welcome him into your ‘boat’ and put out into the deep! He is the Lord! He changes the way we see life. Faith in Jesus leads to greater hope, to a certainty based not on our qualities and skills, but on the word of God, on the invitation that comes from him...”

## **Reflection:**

Resilience is, “the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness.” A person who is resilient has the ability to withstand or recover quickly from difficult conditions. Recovery is possible when

one boldly holds on to a life promoting conviction. Here, it is to hold on to the conviction that, as St. Paul says “suffering produces endurance and endurance produces character and character produces hope and hope does not disappoint us.” Our hope is in Christ who is alive. Pope Francis said convincingly that Jesus leads us to greater hope. While promulgating the decrees of the GC 36 Fr. General said, “Only by confirming that we have placed all our hope in the Lord will we be able to seek and find His will in order to be witnesses of the love of God to all human beings.” We all have become a community of ‘friends in the Lord in a resilient way’ deeply influenced by the valour of Jesuit martyrs. This hope consolidates the spirit of resilience to get up and march forward in life. This hope in Christ and the example of cloud of witnesses within the Church and the Society inspire us to assist the young people to be resilient and spring back and quickly re-establish their dream driven life. Therefore, I ask myself:

- Am I disheartened by the difficulties of life? Why?
- Do I place my hope in Christ and face the improbable with courage?
- Am I a witness to the joys of a hope-filled resilience?

## **Prayers of Petition:**

*Response:* **In your mercy hear us, O Lord**

1. “It is the young who, from their perspective, can help us to understand better the epochal change that we are living and its hope-filled newness.” Merciful Lord, help us listen to the voices of the youth in order to understand their strengths as protagonists of anthropological transformation and bearers of light for the path toward justice, reconciliation and peace, and accompany them in their struggles. **℟**
2. “The apostolic works of the Society of Jesus can make an important contribution to creating and maintaining spaces that are open to young people in society and the Church.” Lord, help us to create spaces for young people in our ministries. Help us to guide them to grow meaningfully by demonstrating incredible grit and resiliency. **℟**

3. “To accompany young people demands of us authenticity of life, spiritual depth, and openness to sharing the life-mission that gives meaning to who we are and what we do.” Lord, as we move ahead to show a hope-filled path to the youth, mould us to be witnesses to the joy of placing our hope in the abiding presence of your Son and the Spirit. ✠

### **Concluding Prayer:**

Dear Lord, you always remain the source of the joy and hope we offer to others. As we strive to accompany young people towards a hope-filled future, show us the way to be resilient, and may your Spirit lead us along the way. Bless us with a discerning heart that as we accompany the youth, we may allow them to be tough, to embrace the improbable with hope and face difficulties with resilience. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. ✠: Amen.

*Fr. Ghattamaneni Jayaraju (AND)*



## **UAP 3.b.3 Encouraging the Audacity of the Improbable**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

To realize the power of hope in the mission of salvation, and the role of the spirit of the audacity of the improbable in the same mission.

### **Context/Composition:**

A document prepared on the eve of the Synod by three hundred young people worldwide pointed out that “online relationships can become inhuman. Digital spaces blind us to the vulnerability of another human being and prevent us from our own self-reflection. Problems like pornography distort a young person’s perception of human sexuality. Technology used in this way creates a delusional parallel reality that ignores human dignity.” ... young people today are the first to have to effect this synthesis between what is personal, what is distinctive to their respective cultures, and what is global. This means that they must find ways to pass from virtual contact to good and healthy communication (*Christus Vivit*, n.90).

“Still today the world is disfigured by those who accumulate what is not theirs, who pursue first their own interests, who build a world on the blood of a multitude of forgotten and manipulated people,

who continuously invent new idols; violence, which disfigures the face of the human in individuals, in societies, and in peoples. The most important thing, in this context, may not be to reverse, with our human hands and within the limits of our minds and our capacities, these acts of violence so as to reset the world, we must, of course, dare to seek how to mend what is torn.” (From the homily of Fr. Bruno Cadoré, O.P., to the delegates of GC 36).

## Scripture Passage

### ***Lk. 1:28-37:***

The angel Gabriel came to Mary and said, “Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.” But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greetings this might be. The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” the angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and his is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.”

## Additional reading:

**2 Tim. 1:8-15: Homily of Fr. Bruno Cadoré, OP:** “Far from being naïve, this audacity is realistic. Paul the apostle, in his second letter to Timothy, helps us to understand why. It is realistic audacity, first, because it is based on a primary gift: ‘rekindle the gift of God,’ and the invitation that echoes other formulated by the apostle: ‘Never flag in zeal, be aglow with the Spirit, serve the Lord’ (Rm. 12:11). .... But this audacity of the improbable is realistic also because it seeks constantly to be in union with the One of whom Paul, enduring his suffering, is made herald, apostle and

doctor, the Saviour Jesus Christ who had done the improbable when he destroyed death and made life and immortality shine through the Gospel” (2 Tim. 1:10).

### **Points for reflection:**

1. What are those moments when I experienced ‘the audacity of the improbable’ in my life?
2. In what way were they encouraging moments?
3. What are the confusions that make me turn away from the acts of hope, and what are the helps I find to go ahead boldly in the mission of the ‘improbable’?
4. How have I been encouraged to inspire the young towards the spirit of ‘the audacity of the improbable’?

### **Prayers of Praise and Gratitude:**

*Response:* **Lord, we thank and praise you for the grace of courage to live toward improbable hope.**

1. Jesus declared ‘Blessed are the poor and theirs is the kingdom of God.’ Pope Francis is daring us to take it up and challenge the corporate world out of a deep love for Christ and his people. ✠
2. In the world of consumerist culture, the life of St. John Berchmans is a great witnessing model for us. It was his realistic appreciation of the value of ordinary things that constituted his holiness. ✠
3. We are living in a world of wars and conflicts leading to a sense of hopelessness among people. Still there are Jesuits who are daring enough to work among the war victims in countries like Syria, South Sudan, Columbia, Myanmar, etc. May this daring spirit bring about a change of heart in war promoting nations. ✠
4. Lord we thank you for the daring works of the Umbrella Movement against Hong Kong Anti-Extradition Amendment Act, the Anti CAA protests by students, etc. Help us journey courageously in the right direction focusing our goal on your glory and the good of the entire human race. ✠

## Hymn:

## Concluding Prayer:

God of initiatives, your ways are mysterious. We increasingly realize your greatness, and have hope in the fruition of your intention. Open our eyes to see and plan, and inspire us to continue with ‘the audacity of the improbable’ in serving your mission joyfully. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. **RZ:** Amen.

*Fr. Ilanko Xavier M. (CEN)*



## **UAP 3.c.1 Learning to Accompany**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

To learn to accompany the youth and realise our failure in the past in this regard.

### **Context/Composition:**

Accompaniment is an inspirational aspect of human beings. Down the centuries in the Bible and in history we see the importance of accompaniment. But today due to individualism society has lost the sense of accompaniment. People are not ready to accompany others. The younger generation faces a lot of difficulties in all areas of life. Even when people do accompany others, it is often with a selfish motive or to impose their own political or religious ideologies. There are others who have a negative feeling and approach towards the younger generation. At present the younger generation needs proper and genuine accompaniment in order to have a right understanding of life. In this regard we Jesuits have increasingly failed because often our accompaniment ends at the gates of our institutions.

### **Texts for meditation:**

Raphael answered, “I will go with him; so, do not fear. We shall leave in good health and return to you in good health, because the way is safe” Tobit 5:16.

‘A light enkindles the other’. Having experienced the love of God St. Alphonsus Rodriguez enkindled it in others. His constant accompaniment and guidance led the young Peter Claver to find his mission among the black slaves. In the same way a Hindu boy, Ramachandran, printed a photo of a Jesuit priest above his personal deity on his marriage invitation. When someone asked him why he had done that, he replied, “It was this priest who helped me to complete my doctoral thesis; because of him a poor student like me could get a PhD.”

The one who accompanies is expected to lead an exemplary life. Right accompaniment without being judgmental can bring out the best in others. Accompaniment brings about gradual change in the lives of youngsters. Being cherished by the love of God through the Spiritual Exercises we are called to accompany others.

### **Points to Ponder:**

1. Have I ever refused to accompany the younger generation as a mission? Why?
2. What are the blocks that keep me from understanding the youth and their perspectives?
3. Do I have a positive feeling about today’s younger generation?

### **Prayers of Repentance:**

***Response: Lord, purify our mind to see the youth as children of God.***

1. Dear Lord, we repent for the times we failed to accompany the younger generation. Give us courage that we may have the strength to accompany them against social evils. **℟**
2. Dear Lord, we repent for the times we were judgmental. Give us the grace to understand our youth from their perspective and help them grow in human values. **℟**
3. Dear Lord, we repent for the times we were not open to see the good in others and encourage them. Help us to grow in the spirit of discernment that we need. **℟**

4. Dear Lord, we repent for the times we did not set a proper example for others. Grant us the grace that our very life may become a model for the younger generation. **℟ Lord, purify our mind to see the youth as children of God.**

**Hymn:**

(Don't lose your way: <https://youtu.be/uGVQJKggqY8>)

Don't lose your way  
with each passing day  
You have come so far  
Don't throw it away

Live believing  
Dreams are for weaving  
Wonders are waiting to start  
Live your story  
Faith, hope and glory  
Hold to the truth in your heart

If we hold on together  
I know our dreams will never die  
Dreams see us through to forever  
Where clouds roll by, for you and me

Soul in the wind  
Must learn how to bend  
Seek out a star  
Hold on to the end  
Valley, Mountain  
There is a fountain  
Washes our tears all away  
Words are swaying  
Someone is praying  
Please let us come home to stay

If we hold on together  
I know our dreams will never die  
Dreams see us through to forever  
Where clouds roll by for you and I

When we are out there in the dark  
We'll dream about the sun  
In the dark we'll feel the light  
Warm our hearts... everyone

If we hold on together  
I know our dreams will never die  
Dreams see us through to forever  
As high as souls can fly  
The clouds roll by  
For you and I.

### **Concluding Prayer:**

Almighty and merciful God, you always accompany us as you accompany your spouse, the Church. Give us the grace that we may accompany our younger brothers and sisters in our mission. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **R:** Amen.

*Sch. Praveen Kumar I. (CEN)*



## **UAP 3.c.2 Jesus who Journeys with the Youth**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

Of a deeper knowledge of our Lord Jesus who always journeys with us that we may in turn journey with the youth and be more understanding.

### **Context/Composition:**

A 27-year-old Mumbai businessman, Raphael Samuel, plans to sue his parents for giving birth to him without his consent (Feb 2019). Though it seems very strange and shocking and we may laugh at it, it is a serious problem among the youth. Mr. Samuel first had this thought when he was five. He says, “I was a normal kid. One day I was very frustrated and I did not want to go to school but my parents kept telling me to go. So, I asked them, ‘Why did you have me?’ My dad had no answer. I think if he had been able to answer, may be, I would not have thought this way.” This is not an isolated case of Mr. Samuel. Often the youth have their own reasons for their behaviour.

Youth is a wonderful stage in life; it not just *a* stage but *the* stage - the spark that we always carry in our hearts. But unfortunately, youth today the world over are facing very difficult times. The breakdown of families, the erosion of moral values, the overriding desire for money, pleasure and power have destroyed many young lives. As

a consequence, they have become prey to the evils of the world. It is not the effect we need to look at but it is the underlying cause we ought to focus on. In this challenging context, we are called to journey with young people with compassionate love.

### **Texts for Meditation:**

***Lk. 13:1-9 (Repent or perish); Lk. 24:13-33 (The road to Emmaus); Jn. 1:35-42***

***Ps. 16:11:***

“You show me the path of life. In your presence there is fullness of joy; in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”

### **Additional Reading:**

***Christus Vivit, n.30 -31:*** The aspects of Jesus’ life can prove inspiring for all those young people who are developing and preparing to take up their mission in life. This involves growing in a relationship with the Father, in awareness of being part of a family and a people, and in openness to being filled with the Holy Spirit and led to carry out the mission God gives them, their personal vocation.

Jesus does not teach young people from afar or from without, but from within your very youth, a youth he shares with you. It is very important for you to contemplate the young Jesus as presented in the Gospels, for he was truly one of you, and shares many of the features of your young hearts. We see this, for example, in the following: “Jesus had unconditional trust in the Father; he maintained friendship with his disciples, and even in moments of crisis he remained faithful to them. He showed profound compassion for the weakest, especially the poor, the sick, sinners and the excluded. He had the courage to confront the religious and political authorities of his time; he knew what it was to feel misunderstood and rejected; he experienced the fear of suffering and he knew the frailty of the Passion. He turned his gaze to the future, entrusting himself into the Father’s safe hands in the strength of the Spirit. In Jesus, all the young can see themselves.”

## **Points to Ponder:**

1. Do our lives give witness to the joy, hope and life of Jesus?
2. What are the qualities of Jesus that have drawn the youth to follow him?
3. Are we truly journeying with and assisting the youth to encounter Jesus?
4. How could our journey with young people challenge us to a more authentic life?

## **Prayers of Petition:**

*Response:* **Inspire us, Oh Lord, to share your love.**

1. Loving Lord, give us your grace to strengthen the youth, journey with them, invite them to encounter others, and engage in generous service. **℟**
2. Loving Lord, give us your grace as we journey with young people. May we become a source of inspiration and hope to them by our exemplary lifestyle. **℟**
3. Loving Lord, give us your grace so that we may encourage young people to walk in the path of peace, justice and reconciliation without violence and hatred. May young people become instruments of peace and harmony. **℟**
4. Loving Lord, give us your grace to understand the youth more deeply so that we may direct their power towards the greater common good. **℟**
5. Loving Lord, give us your grace that we may make young people realise that they are the future pillars of the Church and society at large, so that they may take up the challenge to change and develop themselves for a better and brighter future. **℟**

## **Hymns:**

- 1 Footstep walking with me <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJMIJH7ILAc>

- 2 What a friend we have in Jesus [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8SCorW9r\\_Is](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8SCorW9r_Is)
- 3 Walk with me Oh my Lord (WJL, G-22); Be not afraid – (WJL, G-60)

## Concluding Prayer:

Eternal Father, we rejoice in your greatness and power, your gentleness and love, and your mercy and justice. Guide and strengthen us by your Spirit that we may give ourselves wholeheartedly to the service of the youth. Enable us by your power to journey with young people guiding them to walk with our Lord Jesus Christ. **Rx**: Amen.

Courtesy: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-47154287>

*Sch. Arockia Anand A. (CEN)*



## **UAP 3.c.3 Co-Pilgrims for the Kingdom**

(In the light of the Apostolic Exhortation - *Christus Vivit*)

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

May we may recognise the hardships and rewards of the Kingdom as co-pilgrims, and yet relish the joy which the world cannot offer for us.

### **Context/Composition:**

The kingdom of God is a universal kingdom where people from all nations gather to worship and praise the one living God.

### **Opening hymn:**

As we gather may your spirit...<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=96wFybfqspM>

### **Readings:**

#### **1. Mt. 13:45-46**

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.”

2. **Ps. 84** - How lovely is your dwelling place...

3. Youth is a time of dreams and decisions when the young are called to move forward without cutting themselves off from their roots. There are dreams and ambitions that the youth go after, they are in search for a quality life (cf. *Christus Vivit*, Ch 5, n.137).
4. Institutions play an important role in Youth Ministry. Many young people get educated in our institutions. Our institutions should be welcoming and be like a real home and family for young people. They should be places where young people can come and go. As the lamp guides the people in darkness so too education is a lamp that guides people in values and morals (cf. *Christus Vivit*, Ch 7, n.218).

### **Points for reflection:**

1. Can we as Jesuits lead the youth to the one treasure of ultimate meaning in life?
2. Do we just impart knowledge, and make them eligible to fit in the job industry?
3. What efforts have we made to impart values and morals so that the world is transformed into a place of kingdom values?
4. Are we able to cherish the hardships and consolations of working for the Kingdom as co-pilgrims with the youth?

### **Prayers of Praise and Gratitude:**

**Response: Lord we praise and thank you; help us grow as co-pilgrims of your Kingdom.**

1. Pope Francis speaks of a Jesus who is young and, in this way, sanctifying the young (*Christus Vivit*, Ch.2). We thank the Lord for the presence of young people in our community and mission. We also thank him for our eagerness to be with the youth and guide them in their dreams and ambitions by offering them the kingdom values. **℟**

2. The youth are not merely the future of the Church. They are the present and hence should assume responsibilities proper to them in the Church and society in general (*CV*, Ch. 3). We pray that the youth may take dynamic roles in the Church and society. Through the workings of the Holy Spirit, may we understand their role and accompany them in leading the Church and society according to the ways of God. **✠ Lord we praise and thank you; help us grow as co-pilgrims of your Kingdom.**
3. Pope Francis wants the youth to know that Christ is alive: He is not a distant figure of two thousand years ago but remains an influential and active presence today in the lives of young people (*CV*, Ch.4). We thank you Lord for this realization that you have given us, and pray for the grace that we may continue to impart the same without getting discouraged. **✠**
4. To be young and committed allows one to go beyond small groups. This may find expression in assisting the elderly, the sick, the poor, the homeless and the needy. It is important that young people see themselves as protagonists for change (*CV*, Ch. 5). As we thank God for them, we pray for the grace that God may bless the youth with a spirit of service, commitment and love in their works of mercy. **✠**
5. Beyond family and work, Pope Francis goes on to indicate that some people might feel called to the priesthood and consecrated life (*CV*, Ch. 8). We pray for the youth who are deeply inspired to serve the Lord as priests and religious, that the Lord may shower his grace and blessings upon them. **✠**

## Hymn:

I just keep trusting my Lord...

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8mZIVKDEs0g&list=RD8mZIVKDEs0g&start\\_radio=1&t=1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8mZIVKDEs0g&list=RD8mZIVKDEs0g&start_radio=1&t=1)

## Concluding Prayer:

I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope that I have that desire in all that I am doing. And I know that if I do this, you will lead me by the right road though I may know nothing about it. Therefore, I will trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.  
- *Fr. Thomas Merton.*

*Sch. Infant Leonard (BOM)*



## **UAP 4.a.1 Human Causes of the Ecological Crisis**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

To respond to the urgent challenge to protect our common home for generations to come through sustainable and integral development.

### **Context/Composition:**

The forest fires in the Amazon basin are only a symptom of a far greater problem: rampant and rising deforestation. 7,604 square kilometres (2,970 square miles) of rainforest were felled during the first nine months of 2019 - an 85% increase over the same period in 2018. Unscrupulous land speculators are growing rich as they mine, log and clear rainforest operations often conducted illegally on protected lands. Typically, the speculators cut valuable trees, burn the remainder, and sell the cleared land at a highly inflated price to cattle ranchers or agri-business.

### **Scripture Readings:**

- 1 “The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands” (Ps. 19:1).
- 2 “The earth is the Lord’s” (Ps. 24:1).
- 3 “To him belongs the earth with all that is within it” (Deut. 10:14).

4 “The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine; with me you are but aliens and tenants” (Lev. 25:23).

**5. Reading from *Laudato Sí* (Ch 1, no. 25):** Climate change because of environmental degradation is a global problem with grave implications: environmental, social, economic, political, and for the distribution of goods. It represents one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day. Its worst impact will be felt by developing countries in coming decades. Many of the poor live in areas particularly affected by the phenomena related to warming, as their means of subsistence are largely dependent on natural reserves and eco-systemic services such as agriculture, fishing, and forestry. There has been a tragic rise in the number of migrants seeking to flee from the growing poverty caused by environmental degradation. They are not recognized by international conventions as refugees; they bear the loss of the lives they have left behind, without enjoying any legal protection whatsoever. Sadly, there is widespread indifference to such suffering, which is even now taking place throughout our world. Our lack of response to these tragedies involving our brothers and sisters points to the loss of that sense of responsibility for our fellow men and women upon which all civil society is founded.

**6. Additional Reading from *Laudato Sí* (Ch 1, no. 20)**

### **Reflection:**

Today many Christians neither learn nor understand the theological, spiritual, or moral implications of their own ecological and ontological reality, namely, that everything including human beings is connected and interdependent. We are invited to correct the mistaken interpretations of the biblical term “dominion” (Gn.1:28), which became the basis for rationalizing planetary degradation in the name of a divine mandate. The Judeo-Christian thinking, on the basis of the Genesis account which grants man “dominion” over the earth has encouraged the unbridled exploitation of nature by painting him as domineering and destructive by nature. The interpretations now are of “tilling” and “keeping.” “Tilling” refers to cultivating, ploughing or working, while “keeping” means caring, protecting, overseeing and preserving. This implies a relationship of mutual responsibility

between human beings and nature. Each community can take from the bounty of the earth whatever it needs for subsistence, but it also has the duty to protect the earth and to ensure its fruitfulness for coming generations. *Laudato Si* §67 states: “We are not God. The earth was here before us and it has been given to us.”

In silence let us...

**Examen:** How am I moved interiorly? I note my consolations and desolations.

**Review:** How am I an active participant in the Church’s and the Society’s mission of eco-justice?

### **Prayers of Repentance:**

*Response:* **Lord, listen to your people praying.**

1. We have been uncaring at times and have participated in environmental degradation. We ask the Lord’s forgiveness and say... **℟**
2. We regret not participating in concrete solutions to the environmental crisis because of opposition, lack of interest, denial of the problem, resignation or blind confidence in technical solutions. We ask the Lord’s forgiveness and say... **℟**
3. The Creator does not abandon us; he never forsakes his loving plan nor repents of having created us. We recognize, encourage and thank all those striving in countless ways to guarantee the protection of the home which we share. We pray to the Lord as we say... **℟**
4. We need a conversation that includes everyone since the environmental challenges we are undergoing and its human roots concern and affect us all. For those who have started a new dialogue about how we can shape the future of our planet, we pray to the Lord and say... **℟**
5. The worldwide ecological movement has already made considerable progress and led to the establishment of numerous

organizations committed to raising awareness of these challenges. For their ongoing programmes and their success, we pray to the Lord and say... **℟**

6. Change is possible with the right motivation and education. We pray that the movements offered for human development and our common good found in the treasure of Christian spiritual experience might be understood and taken forward. For this let us pray to the Lord and say... **℟**

### **Concluding Prayer:**

Lord Jesus Christ, as we reflect on the fruits of our prayer, we ask for your constant guidance so that we try to do our part in caring for creation. We ask for your inspiration as we strive to help keep the cosmos for generations to come. **℟**: Amen.

### **Hymn:**

Here I am, Lord (Is 6:8) Composer: Daniel L. Schutte (1981, 1983)

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EcXOkht8w7c>)

*Fr. Konrad Noronha (BOM)*



## **UAP 4.a.2 Creation as a Sacramental Sign - Ecological Learning**

*(Prayer Service based on 'Laudato Si')*

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

To see all of creation proceeding from God, radiating God, and pilgrimaging back to God; to see everything and everyone as part and parcel of one large, loving, cosmic family; to have the eyes to see the whole universe as a visible sign and sacrament of the loving, invisible God.

Look at the world with the eyes of the Trinity: [*Pick & choose a few of the following*]

1. Using our imagination, we place ourselves in the lap of our Triune God and gaze upon our world. Proceeding from a view of all the galaxies, we come to the Milky Way and travel through the immensity of Space - immense, incredible, complex and ceaselessly moving in perfect rhythm. We then gaze upon our planet, earth, a tiny speck of land and sea, and yet, the 'common home' to billions of species of microorganisms and insects, flora and fauna, hills and valleys, rivers and oceans. Finally, we look at humankind: men, women and children across continents, countries, cultures, creeds, classes and castes. We savour the beauty, diversity, colours, complexity and mystery. We pause for a while with glad, grateful hearts.

2. Although God has created the cosmos so fruitful and beautiful, there is widespread exploitation and wanton destruction of Mother Nature and her resources. Pope Francis writes in ***Laudato Si***, n.21: “The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth.” Severe pollution of air and water is causing disease and death to millions of the world’s poor. Global warming has led to the depletion of the ozone layer, causing havoc with ecosystems and earth’s cycles. This has led to global crises like tsunamis, floods, earthquakes, rise in sea levels and drying up of rivers and water resources. Climate change is a serious issue, gravely affecting the ‘poorest of poor’ in the Global South, while an unconcerned, wealthy few in the so-called ‘First World’ continue to consume more and more, with little regard for the consequences of their selfishness and greed.”
3. We focus upon ecological degradation in India, with excessive destruction of resources, especially in the rural areas. Bring to awareness the worst scenes you have experienced - on the one hand, poor farmers struggling to survive and committing suicide, bonded labourers toiling for a pittance, women forced to walk miles in the scorching sun to fetch water, malnourished kids going to bed hungry; on the other hand, MNCs and corporates steamrolling through villages to rob people of their ***jal, jungle,*** and ***jamin*** (water, forest, and land). Pause in solidarity with the wretched of our common home. Ask yourself: What would the compassionate Christ who saw his people as “sheep without a shepherd” think, say, and do, here?

### **Points for Reflection:**

*[Choose a few of the following passages and ponder over them in silence]*

1. Let us listen to God’s Word in the Bible

“Then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life” (Gn. 2:7). Later, God said, “By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust and to dust you shall return” (Gn. 3:19).

Adam and Eve are creatures of the earth, made from dust. But, at the Fall, they are also told: “Cursed is the ground because of you!” (Gn. 3:17).

The Psalmist sings: “Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; let the sea resound, and all that is in it. Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them; let all the trees of the forest sing for joy. Let all creation rejoice before the Lord” (Ps. 96:11-13).

2. Let us listen to the Wisdom of the Catholic Tradition – [Ignatius and Francis of Assisi]

“See how God dwells in creatures, in the elements, giving them existence; in the plants, giving them life; in the animals, giving them sensation; in human beings, giving them intelligence.” “Consider how God labours and works for me in all the creatures on the face of the earth... He is working in the heavens, elements, plants, fruits, cattle, and all the rest – giving them their existence, conserving them...” [Ignatius of Loyola, *Sp Ex.* 235-236].

“All praise be yours, my Lord, through all you have made, and first my Lord, Brother Sun, who brings the day; and through whom you give us light. All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars; in the heavens you have made them, bright, and precious, and fair. All praise be yours, my Lord, through Brothers wind and air, and fair and stormy, all the weather’s moods, by which you cherish all that you have made. All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Water, so useful, humble, precious and pure. All praise be yours, my Lord, through our Sister Mother Earth, who sustains us and governs us, and produces various fruits with coloured flowers and herbs.” [St. Francis of Assisi, fragments of his *Canticle of the Creatures*].

3. Let us listen to the voices of Pope Francis & Father General, Fr. Arturo Sosa.

“The mystic experiences the intimate connection between God and all beings, and thus feels that ‘all things are God’. Standing awestruck before a mountain, s/he cannot separate this experience from God, and perceives that the interior awe

being lived has to be entrusted to the Lord: ‘Mountains have heights and they are plentiful, vast, beautiful, graceful, bright and fragrant. These mountains are what my Beloved is to me. Lonely valleys are quiet, pleasant, cool, shady and flowing with fresh water; in the variety of their groves and in the sweet song of the birds, they afford abundant recreation and delight to the senses and in their solitude and silence, they refresh us and give rest. These valleys are what my Beloved is to me.’” [Pope Francis, *Laudato Si*, n.234]

“Caring for nature is a form of genuinely worshipping the creative work of God. Bold decisions are required to avoid further damage and to bring about lifestyle changes that are necessary so that the goods of creation are used for the benefit of all. We want to be actively present in this process.” [Fr. Arturo Sosa’s Letter to the whole Society on UAPs, Feb. 2019]

4. Let us listen to the Wisdom of other Religious and Tribal traditions

“I am the Self seated in the heart of all creatures. I am the beginning, the middle and the very end of all beings. Thus, all beings have to be treated alike” [Bhagavad Gita, 10:20].

“O Dharme Baba (God our Father), You know everything and we know nothing; You see everything and we see nothing; Let our village get your blessings; Let there be blessings on our children; Let there be plenty of grain in our barns; Let there be peace, harmony and understanding in our village!”

## **Prayers of Petition:**

*Response:* **Lord God, help us to love and to serve all of creation.**

1. Lord God, creator of the cosmos, we praise and thank you for the wonders of creation - the beauty, diversity, complexity, seasons, shapes, sounds, colours, harmony, and everything else that reveals your power and glory. We pray that our lives and voices amplify your power and presence. **℟**

2. Lord God, ruler of all whole earth, we come before you with penitent hearts for the destruction we are guilty of - for turning our beautiful mother earth into an “immense pile of filth”. Instead of being stewards of creation we have become its slayers, and rather than being responsible caretakers we are reckless consumers, always greedily grabbing more and more for ourselves. We beg for forgiveness and ask for the wisdom to view creation as you do. **✠ Lord God, help us to love and to serve all of creation.**
  
3. Lord God, Sustainer of the universe, all creatures find their support and sustenance in you. We pray for all those who specially help you to care for our earth - Adivasis who preserve our forests, farmers who work in the fields, bonded labourers who toil without reward, underpaid women in the rural sector, farm workers who care for cattle, shepherds who tend to flocks, gardeners who keep our environs clean and green. We pray that they be blessed abundantly, strengthened in body and spirit, and paid just wages for their labour. ✠
  
4. Lord God, Sanctifier of the whole world, the psalmist sings: “The earth is the Lord’s, and all that is in it; the world, and those who live in it”. Every little thing, the tiniest of creatures and every living person is a sign and sacrament of your power and presence. We pray that we cultivate a deep sense of reverence and sacredness for all that is, so that in our loving and serving of all of creation, everything and everyone might be led back to you. ✠

[Please feel free to add your own prayers - especially in keeping with the theme]

## Hymns:

Be Exalted, O God! (Ps 105): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4QRXCYYHh9hg>

God still loves the world: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vNR38pRjsps>

## Concluding Prayer:

God of Love, you have created this wonderful cosmos as an overflow, sign and sacrament of your deep and everlasting love for each of us. We thank you, we praise you and we worship you, along with every little creature and every human being who, in their own way and wisdom give glory to you. May we never lose the sense of the sacred and the feeling of oneness with everyone and everything. May we always be glad and grateful, humble and helpful, loving and forgiving, serving and sacrificing - that your life-giving love might shine in us and through us. We make our prayer through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. ✠: Amen.

*Fr. Francis Gonsalves (GUJ)*



## **UAP 4.a.3 Reconciliation with Creation**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

That we may truly reconcile with your creation.

### **Context/Composition:**

We live in a broken world. Everything is polluted: air, water, sound, rivers and seas - even ideas are polluted. There is global warming- pollution, nuclear power, deforestation, soil erosion, globalization, and displacement have destroyed the God's creation.

In 2011, the then Fr. General, Adolfo Nicholas, emphasized the need for restoring creation and for engaging in reconciliation with creation. In 2015, Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si*, became the hallmark in restoring creation. In this encyclical the Pope draws our attention to reconciliation with creation. Today reconciliation with creation is a top priority. It is our duty and responsibility to take care of Mother Nature.

### **Readings for Reflection:**

#### **1. Jer. 2:7:**

“I brought them into a fertile land to enjoy its harvests and its other good things. But indeed, they ruined my land; they defiled the country I had given them.”

**2. Excerpts from *Laudato Si*, n.218:** For a correct shift towards a sustainable future, we must recognize “our errors, sins, faults and failures” which lead to a “heartfelt repentance and desire to change”; in this way, we will be reconciled with others, with creation and with the Creator. Integral development is the acknowledgment of our disharmony in relationship with God, nature and neighbour and striving towards reconciliation with them.

### **Points for Reflection:**

In the Bible creation is always an object of praise and thanksgiving. In Ps. 104 we read: “The universe praises its Creator.” Not only all come from God but all belong to God. The land where we live is considered holy and belongs to God. We are just caretakers. Nature, landscape, galaxies everything radiates God’s infinite mercy and richness. But we have failed to take care of this beautiful universe. Consumer society has hampered God’s beautiful creation.

1. Creation is good and everything what God has created is good. When creating the universe God says seven times, “It was good”. Whatever He has created is good and holy. But because of our human sins and malice we have destroyed God’s creation. *How do we feel when we make the effort to make Mother Earth a better place?*
2. All religions speak highly about creation. Misuse and abuse of creation is unjust. *How are we moved when others take steps to protect, sustain and nurture Mother Nature?*
3. Indigenous people consider creation as holy and belonging to God who has entrusted it to our care. Trees do not merely have a market price; their value goes beyond. It is love, life and the dwelling place of the spirit. Land is the promise of life. Depriving the indigenous people of their land, streams, forests, mountains, and from their affinity to these is really painful. *What concrete steps have we taken to be part of their struggle?*

## Prayers of Praise and Gratitude:

*Response:* **Lord we thank and praise you for the gift of creation.**

1. God in His abundant mercy and love has given us this wonderful creation. To care for it is our sacred responsibility. May we become more sensitive to Mother Nature. For this we gratefully **℟**
2. An ecological conversion is needed in each one's life. May we grow in the realization that we have wounded Mother Nature and may we change our attitude towards creation. For this we gratefully **℟**
3. Nature is a beautiful school. God reveals Himself through his creation. May He help us to see Him in all things and all things in Him. For this we gratefully **℟**
4. To create a natural and peaceful environment is the responsibility of every human person. God has inspired us and has given us courage to carry forward this important task and make the place conducive to live. For this we gratefully **℟**
5. We have inherited the earth where we live. Success does not depend on what we do, but what we leave behind. May we be inspired to make it a more beautiful place than what we inherited. For this we gratefully **℟**

## Concluding Prayer:

Loving, merciful and compassionate God, in your great Providence you have given us this beautiful creation. Make us more sensitive to this your beautiful gift so that we may nurture it and save it for your greater glory. This we ask in your holy name. **℟**: Amen.

*Fr. George Beck (DUM)*

## **UAP 4.b.1 Planet to Heal**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

The grace of a deep sorrow for the failure of humanity to maintain the ecological integrity of our common home, the earth.

### **Context/Composition:**

India is riddled today with various ecological issues. We stand at the bottom of the Global Environmental Performance Index (EPI) rankings. In 2016, the country ranked 141<sup>st</sup> among 180 countries. But it crashed down to the 177<sup>th</sup> position in 2018. Disappointingly, India's carbon footprint is growing at a faster rate than any of the energy-consuming nations. Also, most of the important regions in India are under the grip of a multi-pollutant crisis. Again, India has eleven out of twenty of the most polluted cities in the world.

Besides, there are the problems of poor waste management, lack of sewage treatment operations, government mandated protection of highly polluting public transports and high emission plants, lack of flood control and water scarcity, bio-diversity loss and soil degradation. Down the line, the poorest, the vulnerable and the indigenous people suffer the most in the face of technological expansion and resource exploitation causing geo-physical and humanitarian consequences.

## Readings for Reflection:

### 1. *Is. 24:4-6:*

“The earth mourns and withers; the world languishes and withers; the highest people of the earth languish. The earth lies defiled under its inhabitants; for they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore, a curse devours the earth, and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt; therefore, the inhabitants of the earth are scorched, and few men are left.”

(Pause)

### 2. *Jer. 2:7:*

“I brought you into a plentiful land to enjoy its fruits and its good things. But when you came in, you defiled my land and made my heritage an abomination.”

(Pause)

### 3. *Jer. 12:4:*

“How long will the land mourn, and the grass of every field wither? For the wickedness of those who live in it the animals and the birds are swept away, and because people said, “He is blind to our ways.” (Pause)

### 4. A reading from the *Gitanjali:*

“PRISONER, tell me, who was it that bound you?”

“It was my master,” said the prisoner.

“I thought I could outdo everybody in the world in wealth and power, And I amassed in my own treasure house the money due to my king. When sleep overcame me, I lay upon the bed that was for my lord, And on waking up I found I was a prisoner in my own treasure house.”

“Prisoner, tell me who was it that wrought this unbreakable chain?”

“It was I,” said the prisoner, “who forged this chain very carefully.”

“I thought my invincible power would hold the world captive leaving me in a freedom undisturbed. Thus, night and day I worked at the chain with huge fires and cruel hard strokes. When at last the work was done and the links were complete and unbreakable, I found that it held me in its grip.” (*Gitanjali* no. 31)

(Pause)

### **5. A reading from *Laudato Si* (Ch. 3, n 117):**

Neglecting to monitor the harm done to nature and the environmental impact of our decisions is only the most striking sign of a disregard for the message contained in the structures of nature itself. When we fail to acknowledge as part of reality the worth of a poor person, a human embryo, a person with disabilities – to offer just a few examples – it becomes difficult to hear the cry of nature itself; everything is connected. Once the human being declares independence from reality and behaves with absolute dominion, the very foundations of our life begin to crumble, for “instead of carrying out his role as a co-operator with God in the work of creation, man sets himself up in place of God and thus ends up provoking a rebellion on the part of nature.”

(Pause)

### **Points to Ponder:**

The ecological crisis also challenges our faith. God has put the entire world in the hands of humankind to keep and preserve. Let us take some time to ponder and reflect over the following questions:

1. What have we done to creation?
2. Are we doing justice to the victims: the earth and the poorest of this world?
3. Do we refuse to act with conviction and strength? Why?
4. Could we have acted differently for the good of creation and of the poorest? How?

### **Prayers of Repentance:**

Pope Francis in his encyclical *Laudato Si* mentions that the violence present in our hearts, wounded by sin, is also reflected in

the symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air and in all forms of life. Let us bring to mind that the ecological crisis summons us to a profound interior conversion.

***Response:* Lord, grant us true sorrow for the ways we have failed in environmental stewardship.**

1. For not realizing the encircling culture of relativism in which we are living and being influenced by it; for treating nature and every non-living and living thing in it in a utilitarian manner, we are sorry. ❧
2. For the times we have failed to practice and promote sustainable and integral development, for the times we did not reduce, re-use or recycle in our consumption patterns, and for an increase in our carbon footprint, we are sorry. ❧
3. For our ignorance in making a greater investment in a research outlook in our ministries and situations, and for the times we have not learnt to live wisely, we are sorry. ❧
4. For our lack of leadership in finding new ways of meeting the ecological crisis and for the lack of concern for the future generations and for the poorest, we are sorry. ❧
5. For our failure to look upon the earth and its goods with the value which God has put in them and for not acting differently for the good of creation and the poor, we are sorry. ❧

### **Concluding Prayer:**

Lord God, grant us your peace that we may experience a harmony within to become potential healers of the ruptures between creation and humankind. May we, sinful men, who are called to be companions of Jesus your Son, co-operate in your salvific project of restoring the original purity, beauty and order in your creation. ❧: Amen.

*Sch. Prosenjit Gomes (CCU)*

## UAP 4.b.2: Leanings from our Common Home

### Preparatory Prayer:

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### Introductory hymn:

Let us be aware of ourselves and surrender our whole being to the presence of the Almighty. We sing...Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's Holy Name.

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gLIDE7e5ODU>)

### Grace:

To become more aware of the labouring presence of God in creation.

### Context/Composition:

St. Francis of Assisi, an ardent lover of creation, was so mesmerized by creation and its creatures that he could relate to the universe. He says, "Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon, Brother Sun, and the stars in the heavens, you have made them bright, precious and fair." Pope Francis inspired by St Francis of Assisi, came out with *Laudato Si*. Following the call of the Pope, Father General with months of discernment, has chosen "care for our common home" as the fourth Universal Apostolic Preference. All these efforts are not just one of many. They are the need of the hour.

Pope Francis in *Laudato Si* calls us to listen to the cry of the poor and to the cry of the earth. We are the ones who are making Mother Earth cry; we have inflicted so much pain on the planet. Having repented for our insensitivity, we are called to become aware of the injustice that is done to creation so that we can respond to the cry of Mother Earth.

Today trees are cut, land is engulfed and exploited by corporate companies – all in the name of development. The plastic cups that we use take 50 years to degrade. Are we ready to stop using plastic? The only way to become sensitive towards nature is through personal change. As friends and followers of Jesus we need to learn from Him how to admire and appreciate nature and all its creatures. He could draw a lot of wisdom from birds, plants and animals because He was in complete union with His Father - the labouring God. Let us pray that we become aware of the presence of our labouring God and draw inspiration from the creation.

## **Readings:**

**1. Mt. 6: 25-34:** (Do not worry: Look at the birds of the air...)

**2. Sp. Ex. #235 and 236**

235. I will consider how God dwells in creatures; in the elements, giving them existence; in the plants, giving them life; in the animals, giving them sensation...

236. I will consider how God labours and works for me in all the creatures on the face of the earth; that is, he acts in the manner of one who is labouring. For example, he is working in the heavens, elements, plants, fruits, cattle and all the rest – giving them their existence, conserving them, concurring with their vegetative and sensitive activities, and so forth. Then I will reflect on myself.

**3. A Suggestion:** Greta Thunberg's full speech to world leaders at UN Climate Action Summit (September 23, 2019) (<https://youtu.be/KAJsdgTPJpU>)

## Points for Reflection:

1. Am I open and generous enough to appreciate the beauty and the uniqueness of nature?
2. Do I have the desire to become more and more eco-sensitive?
3. Am I grateful for the creative labour of God in nature?
4. Do I have the humility to learn from creation and from its creatures as Jesus did?
5. Am I perhaps one of those who still make the earth cry?

## Prayers of Petition:

*Response:* **Lord, grant me the grace to learn from nature.**

1. Damage done to the earth is also damage done to the most vulnerable - indigenous people, peasants forced to emigrate (UAP letter by Fr General). May we become more sensitive towards Tribals, indigenous people and peasants who never fail to care for Mother Earth. ✠
2. Nature needs nothing from us but we are totally dependent it. We pray for the desire to renew our relationship with nature; to rekindle our awareness of nature; to rededicate ourselves to our responsibilities towards nature. ✠
3. Finding God in all things is the core of our spirituality. May we become aware of the presence of the labouring God in and around us. ✠
4. Nature is in great danger today. We pray that world leaders take the necessary steps to protect nature and promote eco-awareness. ✠

## Hymn:

How Great Thou Art For (Video): <https://youtu.be/Cc0QVWzCv9k>

The Canticle of Creation by St. Francis: <https://www.catholic.org/prayers/prayer.php?p=3188>

## Concluding Prayer:

Merciful Lord and Creator of the Universe, we thank you for the gift of creation - beautiful mountains and valleys, the sky and the seas, birds and animals, fruits and flowers, and entire universe. We thank you also for the intelligence that you have given us humans to govern this universe. We are sorry that we have failed in our responsibility of caring for our common home. Lord, grant us the grace to be united with nature around as your Son Jesus Christ was. Open our eyes so that we become more and more aware of your loving and labouring presence in and around us. This we ask through Christ our Lord. **Rx**: Amen.

## Hymns on the theme:

<https://youtu.be/9DpmQjRxXKY> - Count on Trees

<https://youtu.be/mEDcKZB7r2A> - This is the air I breathe

<https://youtu.be/4-z-JXJFc4w> - This is our World (For Children)

<https://youtu.be/vw3o6GQ2xe8> - What a wonderful World (For Children)

*Sch. Arockia Amalan V. (MDU)*



## **UAP 4.b.3 Participating in the Evolving Cosmos**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

To have a sincere and open mind and heart to participate in the evolving Cosmos.

### **Context/Composition:**

“Man is created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means to save his soul. And the other things on the face of the earth are created for man that they may help him in pursuing the end for which he is created” (Sp. Ex. 23). We, Jesuits, have been engaged for a long time in the mission of caring for our Common Home. Yet the wake up call of Pope Francis through *Laudato Si* and the recent UAPs demand an even more serious and sincere commitment in this regard. We thank the Lord for the blessings we have received through creation and ask for the grace to contribute to an evolving Cosmos bearing our personal hardships joyfully.

### **Passages for Reflection:**

- 1. Ps. 104: 1-9 or Ps. 33: 4-11 or Gen. 2: 4-9,15**
- 2. An Excerpt from the letter of Fr. General on the UAPs**

“We resolve, considering who we are and the means that we have, to collaborate with others in the construction of alternative

models of life that are based on respect for creation and on a sustainable development capable of producing goods that, when justly distributed, ensure a decent life for all human beings on our planet. The preservation over time of the conditions of life on our planet is a human responsibility of immense ethical and spiritual importance. Our collaboration should include both participating in efforts to analyze problems in depth and promoting reflection and discernment that will guide us in making decisions that help to heal the wounds already inflicted on the delicate ecological balance. We are especially concerned about areas that are so crucial for maintaining the natural equilibrium that makes life possible, such as the Amazon region; the river basins of the Congo, India, and Indonesia; and the great extensions of open sea. Caring for nature in this way is a form of genuinely worshipping the creative work of God. Bold decisions are required to avoid further damage and to bring about lifestyle changes that are necessary so that the goods of creation are used for the benefit of all. We want to be actively present in this process.”

### **Points for Reflection:**

1. Am I ready to collaborate in the care of the Common Home? How?
2. Am I happy to participate in an evolving Cosmos? How?
3. How actively indifferent am I with regard to taking part in the evolving creation?

### **Prayers of Praise and Gratitude:**

The Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins says “The world is charged with the grandeur of God.” We are indeed filled with awe and gratitude for the marvellous things God does in creation and the creatures that live in it. We thank and praise the Lord for making us part of this evolving Cosmos.

*Response:* **We praise and thank you Lord for your manifold blessings.**

1. We thank the Lord for the realization that we are part of this ever-growing universe and we have a great responsibility to care for it. We pray that He gives us the grace to fulfil our responsibility. ✠

2. We thank the Lord for our Holy Mother the Church and pray that she leads her children in the path of liberating this world from the clutches of mass destruction. **℟**
3. We thank the Lord for the Society of Jesus and its concern for our Common Home. We pray that all Jesuits work towards the fulfilment of this mission. **℟**
4. We thank the Lord for all the environmental activists who work tirelessly for the betterment of our Common Home. We pray that they continue to strive to bring people to care for our Common Home. **℟**
5. We thank the Lord for those world leaders who are striving to address the current environmental crisis. We pray that all leaders may understand the urgency of this crisis and work towards resolving it. **℟**

### **Hymn:**

O, give thanks to the Lord (With Joyful Lips, C 17)

### **Concluding Prayer:**

Let us recite together the hymn of St. Francis of Assisi:

Praised be you, my Lord,  
with all your creatures,  
especially for Brother Sun,  
who is the day  
and through whom you give us light.  
And he is beautiful and radiant  
with great splendour;  
and bears a likeness of you, Most High.  
Praised be you, my Lord,  
through Sister Moon and the stars,  
in heaven you formed them clear  
and precious and beautiful.  
Praised be you, my Lord,  
through Brother Wind,  
and through the air, cloudy and serene,  
and every kind of weather

through whom you give sustenance  
to your creatures.  
Praised be you, my Lord, through Sister Water,  
who is very useful and humble  
and precious and chaste.  
Praised be you, my Lord,  
through Brother Fire,  
through whom you light the night,  
and he is beautiful and playful  
and robust and strong.

*Sch. Casimir Eelaraj A. (DUM)*



## UAP 4.c.1 Groaning of Creation

### Preparatory Prayer:

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### Grace:

Of an interior awareness of our selfish motives in using the things of the world, and an intense groaning and sorrow for our selfishness.

### Opening Hymn:

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tboz8NjqZ3E>)

Desert drying mountains shake and tremble  
Seas are warming species fade away  
Still you're sovereign You're bringing restoration  
And all the earth, it cries to you  
    All creation groans longing for you to come  
    We join with creation, and sing  
    Come, Jesus come  
Conflict's rising nations crack at the seams  
People dying hunger and disease  
Still you're hovering, Your Spirit renewing  
And all the earth, it cries to you  
    All creation groans longing for you to come  
    We join with creation, and sing  
    Come, Jesus come

All creation groans longing for you to come  
We join with creation, and sing  
Come, Jesus come  
We sing come, Jesus come

## **Context/Composition:**

### ***Laudato Sí, n.39:***

“The replacement of virgin forest with plantations of trees, usually monocultures, is rarely adequately analyzed. Yet this can seriously compromise a biodiversity with the new species being introduced does not accommodate. Similarly, wetlands converted into cultivated land lose the enormous biodiversity which they formally hosted. In some coastal areas the disappearance of ecosystems sustained by mangrove swamps is a source of serious concern.”

## **Readings:**

### ***Rom. 8:18-23:***

“I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now, and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for the adoption, the redemption of our bodies.”

### ***Laudato Sí #38 &40 (Select portions)***

## **Reflection:**

The world we live in and share with all other beings, bears the hallmarks of humans who have exploited and plundered it because of

consumerism and the selfish motives of faulty developmental projects. God's creation is groaning under the weight of the devastating results for our human action. Deforestation, air pollution, increasing number of species that are getting extinct, the rapid increase in the climate change, lack of clean water and forceful displacement are some obvious ways in which we have degraded God's creation. The ecological crisis almost always works out its harmful effects most powerfully on those who are already in abject poverty.

St. Paul, appropriately calls us to give renewed attention to how we might become stewards of God's creation here and now, by having its renewed vision of God's transformation of creation. God has provided us the ground and mandate for all to engage in care for our common home. But the entire humanity is now at fault for its failure to love and care for God's creation. After all, creation groans and so does humanity as it anticipates its resurrection body. It may be that creation's groaning and its subjection to futility refers less to a cosmic fall than it does to the story of creation's need for sanctified and transformed humans who do not rabidly exploit it for their own advantage but care for it in such a way as to enable it to flourish.

### **Points for Reflection:**

1. How have I/we exploited creation for selfish motive?
2. What provokes me/us to indulge in showing a destructive attitude toward creation?
3. Do I/we hear the groaning of creation? If yes, then what do I/we do about it?

### **Prayers of Repentance:**

*Response:* **Lord, we repent and pray to you to give us a change of heart.**

1. God of the universe, you call us to be good stewards of this earthly home. But through our greed and indifference we have abused its beauty and damaged its potential. Forgive us and empower us that we may nurture and love all creation. **✠**

2. God of creation and Lord of life, you asked us to care for the earth. But we have failed. Help us to realize how fragile and unstable we have made our surroundings. **℟ Lord, we repent and pray to you to give us a change of heart.**
3. Lord, due to our selfish tendency we have exploited nature without recognizing its value. Help us to nurture creation and to work towards a more sustainable world for the benefit of all. **℟**
4. Ever living God, from ice-melting to polar bears dying, we are damaging your creation. Forgive us and free us from fear and denial. May your Spirit so guide our governments that they may work out policies for healing and gentle change. **℟**
5. God of compassion, the earth is yours with all its beauty and goodness, its richness and overflowing provision. But we have usurped it for our own faulty developmental projects and grabbed its resources. May we not abuse your trust but care for the earth. **℟**
6. Loving God we experience your love and care for us in and through the earth. It feeds us and clothes us and longs to do the same for generations to come. Forgive our greed and selfish use of your gifts. May we learn to preserve the earth for all those who live now, and for the generations that will follow. **℟**

### **Concluding Prayer:**

O God, creator of the universe, you placed us on the earth and commanded us to care for it. Your works declare your glory and splendour, and you call us to praise and reverence you. But we have degraded and destroyed the earth's bounty. We have taken beauty and majesty for granted. Have mercy upon us. We have become estranged from the creatures we share this planet with. Renew us in the waters of Baptism; refresh us with the breath of your Spirit. Grant us your peace and sustain us with the word of life. We ask this through Christ Jesus our Lord. **℟: Amen.**

*Sch. Anish Hansdak (HAZ)*

## **UAP 4.c.2 Joining Hands with all People of Goodwill**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

That we may be able to love and serve the Divine Majesty by caring for our common home in collaboration with others.

### **Context/Composition:**

Joining hands with all people of goodwill is a creative response to the ecological crisis faced by creation. We live in an era of change: a transformation that is not only cultural but also anthropological, creating a new meaning at times contrary to traditional understanding, nurturing of values clashing with a process of ‘rapidification’. The external rapidification is also intertwined with cultural, moral, spiritual, personal, intellectual and interpersonal relationship of human persons, and their relationship with creation. Today we are also faced with high investment on ‘industrialisation’ for creating better world, but in the process the poor are displaced, trees are uprooted leading to destruction. In the name of ‘modernizing India’ the building of roads and bridges, industries and factories is taken up in many cities and towns. This has displaced many people separating families and communities from one another. Of course, there are organizations and NGO focusing on environmental and human rights concerns. They are playing an active role in re-building our broken and breaking

world. This challenges us to join hands with one another to build communities.

## **Texts for Reflection:**

### ***Mk. 9:38-41:***

John said to him, “Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us.” But Jesus said, “Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. Whoever is not against us is for us. For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward.”

### ***Laudato Si’: nn13,14 and 240***

The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development. The Creator does not abandon us, forsake his loving plan or repent of having created us. Humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home (# 13) inclusive of everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, affects us all. This calls us for a relationship of new and universal solidarity, and to cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents (# 14); because the divine Persons are subsistent relations, and the world, created according to the divine model, is a web of relationships. Creatures tend towards God, and in turn it is proper to every living being to tend towards other things. The human person grows more, matures more and is sanctified more to the extent that he or she enters into relationships, going out from themselves to live in communion with God, with others and with all creatures (# 240).

**Fr Arturo Sosa, on UAP:** “We resolve, considering who we are and the means that we have, to collaborate with others in the construction of alternative models of life that are based on respect for creation and on a sustainable development capable of producing goods that,

when justly distributed, ensure a decent life for all human beings on our planet.”

Collaboration among people of goodwill and societal structures is a necessity in the actualization of a sustainable economy. This in turn becomes instrumental in respecting and preserving the natural beauty, thus revering God’s creation. Such a collaboration is not just among people of goodwill but also with Nature and ultimately with God.

### **Indian Culture: (Art of Living group)**

“Respect and care for our planet and our environment forms an intrinsic aspect of spirituality that forms the basis of the Art of Living. A healthy future for our coming generations is predicated on how we care for our environment in the present. Various projects have been initiated by the organization in water conservation, tree plantations, indigenous species protection as well as chemical-free farming. An integral part of ensuring nature conservation is nurturing values about environmental issues with children and young adults. Awareness programs for youth are a vital aspect of the organization’s long-term vision in this direction. Our connection with the environment is our first level of experience, and one of the most important. If our environment is clean and positive, it has a positive impact on all the other layers of our existence. As a result, they come into balance and we experience a greater sense of peace and connection within ourselves and with others around us.” (Courtesy: <https://www.artofliving.org/in-en/care-environment>)

### **Points for Reflection:**

1. Do I feel that the present environmental crisis involves everyone?
2. If so, what could I do to re-fashion God’s creation collaborating with other people?
3. What concrete steps do I take to build our common home personally and collectively?

## Prayers of Petition:

*Response:* **Lord, graciously hear our prayer**

1. We pray for a global ecological conversion that becomes the driving force to relate to our fellow human beings as friends in the Lord. We are created in the image and likeness of God and, therefore, destroying the environment is injustice done to God. **℟**
2. We pray that people of goodwill come together as one family of God to build the broken communities of the displaced, the migrants, the refugees, and especially those made poor because of ‘modernization’. **℟**
3. We pray for an interior knowledge of the ethical and spiritual roots of environmental problems and of what God’s world needs. We pray that we may strive to move towards a radical commitment to replace consumerism with sacrifice, greed with generosity, wastefulness with a spirit of sharing in love. **℟**
4. We pray that the goodness found in every religion in caring of our common home may be made known through inter-religious cooperation so that religions may become a source of harmony between God, others and nature. **℟**
5. We pray that world leaders may make alternative choices so that sustainable development may continue to build communities as one family rather than displacing one community for the sustenance of the other. **℟**

## Concluding Prayer:

Almighty and ever-living God, creator of all, walk with us as we co-operate with one another as one human family in caring for our common home. May we be continuously graced with your self-giving love so that we may move from our self-centred love to an others-oriented life, from our self-sufficiency to collaborate with others to bring about transformation in our world. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. **℟: Amen.**

*Sch. Jaya Singh T. (PUN)*

## **UAP 4.c.3 New Heaven and New Earth**

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

To be in awe and to feel grateful for the beauty of God's creation, and become effective collaborators in the creation of a New Heaven and a New Earth.

### **Opening hymn:**

Every tiny star that twinkles... (Or) God still loves the world...

### **Context/ Composition:**

India over the years has witnessed a boom in the economic and scientific sphere. It has the second largest population, third largest and fast-growing economy in the world. However, such advancement has come, at times, at the cost of unsustainable initiatives by those in decision making bodies. There has been rapid urbanization. But in this process, sustaining the environment has taken a back seat. Pollution of various types, water scarcity, poverty, unwieldy bureaucracy and corruption are becoming hindrances to progress towards a better society. There is also an attempt to remove the identity of the Tribals from 'Adivasis' to 'vanavasis' which may have negative repercussions on their life of solidarity with nature.

## **Texts for Reflection:**

### ***Is. 65:17-19:***

“See, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more.”

In this passage the verb *bāra* means ‘to create’ in the participle. It is interpreted as creation is happening now; that God is transforming the Cosmos. It implies that the creation of the new heaven and the new earth is a status quo wherein God transforms the plight of the poor and eventually the land (nature) into a joyous one; for this reality to be possible there needs to exist a harmony between the humans and the nature.

### ***Ps. 65: 9-13:***

“You visit the earth and water it, you greatly enrich it; the river of God is full of water; you provide the people with grain, for so you have prepared it. You water its furrows abundantly, settling its ridges, softening it with showers, and blessing its growth. You crown the year with your bounty; your wagon tracks overflow with richness. The pastures of the wilderness overflow, the hills gird themselves with joy, the meadows clothe themselves with flocks, the valleys deck themselves with grain, they shout and sing together for joy.”

## **Spiritual Exercises: nn 230-233**

### **Cecilia Calvo:**

“The important role of ecological conversion that the Integral Ecology Conference participants called for is a shift – an ‘ecological conversion’ that leads not only to a change of mind but also a change of lifestyle and one that keeps the stewardship of the planet’s resources in mind.”

## Story:

Kaitiakitanga: Traditionally, the Māoris (an indigenous Tribe in New Zealand) believe there is a deep kinship between humans and the natural world. This connection is expressed through *kaitiakitanga*, meaning guardianship or management - a way of managing the environment. Today there is growing interest in kaitiakitanga as iwi (set of people bound together by descent from a common ancestor or ancestors) restore their environment and their culture. Being an integral part of nature also means to be in touch with its Creator. This also helps us to respond to the call of the Lord to transform ourselves in order to be part of the new heaven and new earth, which could be told as the total harmony between the transcendental reality and the constructed reality. It is the ‘kairos encompassing the kronos’ movement.

## Teilhard de Chardin:

The whole of Creation is heading towards completion which he terms as the omega point of divine unification or Omega point. He terms it as Christogenesis. He reinterprets Ignatius vision of God expressing his eternal love towards the creation and thus “God enters ordinary human life, its work and struggles. Like a potter with clay, a mother in childbirth or a mighty force giving life to dead bones, God brings life out of suffering and death and works to create and recreate me.”

**The Amazon: For Integral Ecology – The Synod of Bishops – June 17, 2019:** “In order to promote integral ecology in the daily life of the Amazon, it is also necessary to understand the notion of intergenerational communication and justice, which includes the transmission of ancestral experience, cosmologies, spiritualities and theologies of the indigenous peoples in terms of care for our common home. ‘In the struggle we must trust in God’s power, because creation is of God, because God continues his work. The struggle of our ancestors is to fight for these rivers, for our territories, to fight for a better world for our children.’”

## **Points to Ponder:**

1. Is 'Newness' something born out of something or, in the paradigm of the Biblical message, is it a 'metanoia' - a transformation to something better, more constructive?
2. Am I sensitive and perceptive to recognize God's presence in creation and respond to his call in the renewal of the Earth?
3. How do I envisage the reality of New Heaven and New Earth?
4. What is the need of the hour to fulfil God's vision of a harmonious creation?

## **Prayers of Praise and Gratitude:**

*Response:* **O Lord, as we praise and thank you, inspire us to renew the face of the Earth**

1. God our loving father, we are grateful to you for providing us with this beautiful creation. Help us to be prophetic voices denouncing all those practices which aim at consumerism and individualism. ✠
2. We pray for a sustainable development of human civilization as well as nature. Selfish and self-centred attitudes are making us deviate from creation-centred and human-centred attitudes. May we strive to preserve the uniqueness of Mother Nature through an integral development of all. ✠
3. God's beatific vision is that creation as well as the human person becomes fully alive, fully joyful. In order to achieve this, we need to strive to find God in the day-to-day life of every individual. We pray that God may help us open our eyes to become aware of His presence in creation. ✠
4. We pray for all people of goodwill who through NGOs, institutions and movements endeavour to actualize the new heaven and new earth in their own little ways. May God give them perseverance, courage and far-sighted thinking in their pursuit of attaining this vision. ✠

5. We pray for Pope Francis and the efforts he is making to establish peace and harmony in the four-fold relationship of God-Nature-Other-Self. May God bless him with a strong will, a healthy body and a firm spirit to continue his efforts. ✠

### **Concluding hymn:**

Psalm 104: Renew the face of the earth

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G1CN-gaKiWM>)

### **Concluding Prayer:**

God our source of life, we thank and praise you for your generosity and mercy in sustaining the Cosmos. We also implore you to enable us to recognize your presence in creation and thus to fulfil your beatific vision of the New Heaven and New Earth. Help us to be your effective collaborators in proclaiming your Kingdom. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. ✠: Amen.

*Sch. Vinod AJ (KAR)*







## *Part II*



**PRAYERS ON  
THE CONFERENCE APOSTOLIC  
PREFERENCES  
(CAP)**





## **CAP 1 FOSTER PEACE AND RECONCILIATION**

### **CAP 1.1 To Work Towards Peace and Reconciliation at All Levels of Society**

#### **Introduction:**

The world is in need of peace and reconciliation. As we gather together to pray, let us remember all those people who, as social activists, teachers, or pastors, are working to establish peace in the world. We know that only in a peaceful situation we are able to understand and appreciate others. It is only through peace and reconciliation that we can come closer to our fellow beings and finally to God. Therefore, we need to constantly work towards peace and reconciliation at all levels of the human society. And we need God's grace to be truly committed in such a challenging work.

#### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Loving God! We thank and praise you for all your grace and love. Guide us along your way, so that we may experience your divine presence and power in our endeavours to bring about peace and reconciliation in our world that longs for peace in the midst of evil and divisive forces.

#### **Grace:**

Lord, give us the grace to understand that peace in the world is possible if we, who live in this planet earth, desire it and are willing to make sacrifices to achieve it. Let us realize that we need to give peace a chance. Help us to see that our peace is in accepting your will (E'n la suavolontade e nostra pace).

## **Context:**

Today human society is divided on grounds such as language, culture, nationality, creed, religion, ethnicity and ideology. Although there are concerted and consistent peace initiatives undertaken by political, religious leaders and international agencies like United Nations' Organization, the sad fact is that our humanity stands divided and at variance with each other for many reasons. The greatest irony of the situation is this that religion that should be a unifying force in the world has become the cause of most wars and internal conflicts in the recent past throwing up the new phenomenon of large-scale migration of population within countries and between nations. After the Cold War period we have been facing several low intensity wars/conflicts at different times. There is also the continuous war against terrorism that is making the peace in the world appear very fragile. Pope Francis has said, "The world is at war, because it has lost peace," and "perhaps, one can speak of a third war, one fought piecemeal." It is in such a situation of a fragmented world that we need to reach out with not only peace initiatives, but with efforts at reconciliation and mutual acceptance.

## **Reading(s) for Reflection:**

*Scripture Reading: 2Cor 5:18-21:*

*Jesuit Sources: GC36, d. 1:*

Companions in a Mission of Reconciliation and Justice, n. 31.

All our ministries should seek to build bridges, to foster peace. To do this, we must enter into a deeper understanding of the mystery of evil in the world and the transforming power of the merciful gaze of God who labours to create of humanity one reconciled, peaceful family. With Christ, we are called to closeness with all of crucified humanity. With the poor, we can contribute to creating one human family through the struggle for justice. Those who have all the necessities of life and live far from poverty also need the message of hope and reconciliation, which frees them from fear of migrants and refugees, the excluded and those who are different, and that opens them to hospitality and to making peace with enemies.

## ***Church Documents:***

From the Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exultate* of Pope Francis on the Call to Holiness in Today's World, *nn.* 88, 89.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God”(88) Peacemakers truly “make” peace; they build peace and friendship in society. To those who sow peace Jesus makes this magnificent promise: “They will be called children of God” (Mt 5:9). ... And if there are times in our community when we question what ought to be done, “let us pursue what makes for peace” (Rom 14:19), for unity is preferable to conflict. (89) It is not easy to “make” this evangelical peace, which excludes no one but embraces even those who are a bit odd, troublesome or difficult, demanding, different, beaten down by life or simply uninterested. It is hard work; it calls for great openness of mind and heart, since it is not about creating “a consensus on paper or a transient peace for a contented minority”, or a project “by a few for the few”. Nor can it attempt to ignore or disregard conflict; instead, it must “face conflict head on, resolve it and make it a link in the chain of a new process”. We need to be artisans of peace, for building peace is a craft that demands serenity, creativity, sensitivity and skill. Sowing peace all around us: that is holiness.

## **Questions to Ponder Over:**

1. What has been my contribution towards peace and Justice in my society?
2. In what way could I become a more effective channel of peace?
3. How much does suffering in this world affect me as a person/human being?

(Pause for silent reflection)

## **Prayers of Petition:**

***Response:* Lord heal us that we may become channels of healing and Justice.**

1. Lord, we thank You for all your blessings, and for all the beautiful creations in heaven and on earth. Thank you for creating every

living and non-living species on the earth. Help us to understand that we are created for one another. Heal us all in mind, body and spirit. Look after us and help us to understand the sanctity of the primordial sacrament, upon which we live. May we learn to nurture it and live upon it in unity and peace! Let us pray to the Lord. **℟ Lord heal us that we may become channels of healing and Justice.**

2. Thank you Lord for creating us in your own image and likeness. Forgive us for the times we have defaced this image in our selfishness and greed. We pray that we, the human family, strive to put an end to the violence perpetrated by harsh words, deadly weapons, or cold indifference. May our homes, our nation, and countries around the world become instruments of peace, let us pray to the Lord. **℟**
3. Lord, you teach us to love our neighbours as ourselves. Give us the grace to see every human being as a child of God, regardless of race, language or culture. Give us wisdom to receive the stories and experiences of those different from ourselves, and to respond with humility and strength to resolve differences non-violently and respectfully, and the courage to be a model in our own behaviour, let us pray to the Lord. **℟**
4. We pray for our public officials and leaders, that they may follow the path of Christ's sacrifice and strive to work for fair education, adequate housing, and equal opportunities for employment for all, and especially, work towards justice and healing for all those who have experienced violence and racism, let us pray to the Lord. **℟**

### **Hymn:**

Lord Make me a means of your peace. (Joyful Melodies- 389)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qw2jBJguPoE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qw2jBJguPoE)

### **Concluding Prayer:**

Jesus, you came to the world to reconcile us with God, with one another and with the whole creation. And you accomplished it in

and through your death on the Cross. But as human beings we have broken that relationship. As we live in the broken world, help us to examine our lives and discover the selfishness and injustice prevalent in the way we are treating God, humanity and nature. Let us realize our responsibility to reconcile with God, with one another and with nature so that we may establish the reign of God. Let us not give mere answers to the problems of the world but take concrete actions aimed at reconciliation and peace. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. **Rx:** Amen.

*Sch. Stephen Lalruatsaka S.J. (KHM) & Team*



## **CAP 1.2 To Expose Endemic Violence and Hatred Propagated by Vested Interests**

### **Introduction:**

Our country is being systematically divided on the grounds of religion and caste. People from various religious minority groups are being discriminated, and hatred is being propagated against many innocent people for mere political gain. In this context, the call of every Christian is not to an honor or a privilege or preference over others, but to be sent out, to engage actively in God's Mission of love.

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God our Lord! grant us that, as we begin this prayer service, all our intentions and efforts may be ordered purely to the service of Your Divine Majesty through serving the human community.

### **Grace:**

We pray for the grace that we may become instruments of peace and harmony among the followers of different religions in order to establish the kingdom of God in our country.

### **Context:**

The situation in our country and around the world today is one of gross inequality and injustice. Many, with vested interests, are misusing the cow slaughter laws and anti-conversion laws to target innocent people. The two most important pillars of democracy, the judiciary and the media, are weakened. The mainstream media has

now become more like an extended propaganda machinery for the government. The harassment of people working for the upliftment of the Tribals, Dalits, minorities and for environmental concerns never seems to cease. Majoritarian political ideologies based on hierarchical and patriarchal socio-political systems seem to be driving these movements of hatred and violence against hapless victims. The deafening cries of the innocent pleading for justice, peace and harmony are pulling at our heartstrings. We turn to the Lord in prayer in order that He may dispel this darkness of hate and fill us with the light of peace.

### **Reading(s) for Reflection:**

*Scripture Passages: Gen 4:1-9 (or) Ex 3:7-10*

### **Church Documents:**

Pope Francis: Meeting with members of the Argentine Institute for Interreligious Dialogue Nov. 18, 2019, the Pope said that “in today’s precarious world, dialogue among religions is not a weakness. It finds its reason for being in the dialogue of God with humanity.” The Pope denounced the fundamentalist mentality saying “we cannot accept nor understand and cannot function anymore. Fundamentalism is a plague and all religions have some fundamentalist first cousin.” The Pope added saying “This is the key: Identity cannot be negotiated because if you negotiate your identity, there is no dialogue, there is submission. Each (religion) with its own identity is on the path of dialogue.”

“The complex human reality of brotherhood,” the Pope continued, “can be seen in scripture when God asks Cain about the whereabouts of his brother. That same question must be asked today and lead members of all religions to reflect on ways of becoming channels of brotherhood instead of walls of division. To see the dangers of fundamentalism, Christians must also reflect on their own history, including the Thirty Years’ War, which began in 1618 as a conflict between Catholic and Protestant states, and the St. Bartholomew’s Day massacres of 1572, which saw the targeted assassinations of Huguenots by Catholic mobs in France. A bit of history should frighten us, whoever doesn’t feel frightened from within should ask themselves why. It is important to show that we believers are a factor

of peace for human societies and in doing so, we will respond to those who unjustly accuse religions of inciting hatred and causing violence,” the Pope said.

### **Questions to Ponder Over:**

1. What did our forefathers envision when they wrote the Constitution?
2. How is religion being used to deceive innocent people for political gains?
3. How is the media being used to propagate hate rather than foster harmony?
4. What is our role to help spread the message of unity in the context of violence being propagated?

(Pause for silent reflection)

### **Prayer of Petitions:**

*Response:* **Lord graciously hear our prayer.**

1. In India, we see and hear every day the ever-increasing traumatic attacks on poor and religious minorities by the religious fundamentalists under the protection of majoritarian political machineries. In these turbulent and trying times, many struggle to see God especially when faced by the cruelty of other human beings. We ask the good Lord to awaken the hearts and minds of every person to become partners in promoting peace and harmony. For this let us pray to the Lord. **℟**
2. We cannot close our eyes or look the other way in the face of injustice, inequality, hunger, poverty, sexual harassment, and neglect people living on the streets lacking even the bare necessities. Let’s ask for the grace to become more generous and have a magnanimous heart to care for the people in need. For this let us pray to the Lord. **℟**
3. Pope Francis constantly urges us all to take care of the earth, which has been entrusted by God to generation after generation, so that we may cultivate it and hand it over to our children. Let

us pray that we be agents of change, to protect and restore the decaying ecological system of our time. For this let us pray to the Lord. ✠

4. We pray for justice for the falsely accused, freedom for the wrongly imprisoned, healing for the tortured or abused, care for the orphan and widow, concern for the refugees and dispossessed, and forgiveness for our failure to act. May we weep as you weep, love as you love, and not be afraid but stand for the cause of justice, for the sake of your children, wherever they might be. For this let us pray to the Lord. ✠

### **Hymn/Video:**

“Hymn for Peace”, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BG4mVL5f8kM>

“Instruments of Peace”, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e2HMB VCghHs>

### **Concluding Prayer:**

Almighty and everlasting God, the creator of the whole universe, we thank you for making us realize the pain of various discriminated religious minorities in our country so that we may become powerful means to gradually eradicate the endemic violence and hatred propagated by vested interests. Lord, bestow upon each one of us your bountiful grace of prudence and courage so that we may be the channels of love against hatred, peace against violence, unity against division, generosity against greed, attitude of sharing against profit making, hope against despair and equality against discriminations. We make this humble prayer through your incarnate Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. ✠: Amen.

*Sch. Jeevan Prakash Isahak S.J. (PAT) & Team*

## **CAP 1.3 To Rediscover Strategies for Non-violent Conflict Resolution**

### **Introduction:**

Jesus preached non-violence (see Mt. 5:43-44; Lk. 6:28-31). Christian literature, from the first three centuries, affirms that the earliest followers of Jesus Christ completely rejected all forms of violence and bloodshed – no abortion, no euthanasia, no capital punishment, no war. But this drastically changed when Emperor Theodosius I issued the Edict of Thessalonica in 380 A.D., making Catholic Christianity the religion of the Roman Empire. This marriage of church and state swung open the doors for Christian participation in the military of the Roman Empire.

Today many individuals, communities and countries take recourse to violence or military force to solve their problems. But sadly, problems are not solved, only a spiral of violence is let loose. In ‘Populorum Progressio’ (30), Pope Paul VI narrates – “There are certain situations whose injustice cries to heaven. When whole populations destitute of necessities live in a state of dependence barring them from all initiative and responsibility, and all opportunity to advance culturally and share in social and political life recourse to violence, as a means to right these wrongs to human dignity, is a grave temptation.” They are sorely tempted to redress these insults by the means of violence.

It is time for us the Christian to discover the strategies for non-violent means of conflict-resolution, because we are not fighting against any human being but the dark powers. (Eph. 6:12).

The Ignatian Spirituality of finding God in all things and Gandhian philosophy of non-violence which consists of non-cooperation, non-

violence and peaceful resistance of established injustices will help us to strengthen us spiritually to counter the power of darkness.

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Lord our God, give us the grace that all our intentions, actions and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of Your Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

Interior knowledge of Our Lord who became human for us, that we may love him more intensely and follow him more closely.

### **Context:**

After evicting the foreign rulers by non-violent means, the Constitution of India guaranteed liberty, equality, fraternity and justice for all irrespective of caste, creed and ethnicity. Today, the situation has changed. The Hindu nationalist party at the centre is trying might and main, to re-establish the caste system, and deprive the Tribals, the Dalits and the minorities, of land, education, job, health care and other basic necessities. There are laws which have been enacted against the basic structure of the constitutions to divide and suppress the people on the ground of caste, creed and ethnicity.

For the oppressed, “non-violent means” may seem to be just an abstract idea. But Mahatma Gandhi used it. For Mahatma Gandhi non-violent movement was a spiritual movement. He said that nonviolence for him was the soul-force or the power of Godhead within us. It is positive state of love, doing good even to the evil-doer. It is a weapon of the strong. It calls forth the greatest courage. What is important is the constant seeking of Truth and holding on to the power of truth. He used non-cooperation; non-violence and peaceful resistance as his “weapons”. In the process of this struggle for justice with these weapons, he accepted imprisonment, rejection and insult, but finally the truth did prevail.

## **Reading(s) for Reflection:**

***Scripture Reading(s): Lk. 22:49-53; (Or) Micah 4:1-4 (Or) Eph 2:14-16***

## **Pope Francis' Message:**

Pope Francis on World Day of Peace 2016 message said, “Jesus himself lived in violent times. Yet He taught that the true battlefield, where violence and peace meet, is the human heart: for “it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come” (Mk 7:21). But Christ’s message in this regard offers a radically positive approach. He unfailingly preached God’s unconditional love, which includes forgiveness. He taught his disciples to love their enemies (cf. Mt 5:44) and to turn the other cheek (cf. Mt 5:39). When on the night before He died, He told Peter to put away his sword (cf. Mt 26:52), Jesus marked out the path of nonviolence. Whoever accepts the Good News of Jesus is able to acknowledge the violence within and be healed by God’s mercy, becoming in turn an instrument of reconciliation. In the words of Saint Francis of Assisi: “As you announce peace with your mouth, make sure that you have greater peace in your hearts”.”

Active non-violence is like the love of Christ itself. It is far more effective than military force. If all Christians truly start loving our enemies and the opponents, the world will change. And instead of despising them, executing them, shooting them, torturing them, starving them, aborting them, bombing them and threatening to nuke them, we begin to love them, it will be a tremendous leap forward on our journey into the Kingdom of God as preached and lived by the non-violent Jesus.

## **Questions to ponder over:**

1. Do you think the message of non-violence or ahimsa of Gandhi is relevant in today’s context?
2. How do you compare the teachings of Jesus with Gandhi’s movement of non-violence?

3. Do you agree that Gandhi made good use of the teachings of Jesus for achieving Indian independence, while the Church in the middle ages and before, gave a counter-witness to Jesus' teachings by its abject surrender to worldly power and abdicating the spiritual character of its governance?

(Pause for silent reflection)

### **Prayer of Petitions:**

*Response:* **Lord, make us channels of your peace.**

1. Though we are aware of the violence happening around us to the people and nature, many a time we may fail to reflect over it and take steps to promote justice and peace. Lord, give us a generous and courageous heart to feel for everybody and for everything as part of me and to work for peace. Let us pray to the Lord... ❧
2. Every good or bad deed begins with an individual. Our Loving Father, give each one of us the grace to think and feel positively so that our words and deeds spread the positive energy of peace and harmony to the people we meet in our lives. Let us pray to the Lord... ❧
3. While conflicts cannot be avoided in our lives, we understand that violence will never solve the conflicts. As Jesus says, "... all who take the sword will perish by the sword" (Mt. 26: 52). Let us ask our Lord Jesus, to help us imbibe his values of non-violence, give up words like "swords" that incite violence, and instead become channels of peace and reconciliation in the world. Let us pray to the Lord... ❧
4. A person without having experienced God's love and love for other persons will never know the role of love during conflicts and violence. Jesus was able to share such love even during His suffering. "He touched his ear and healed him" (Lk. 22: 51). Let us ask our Lord Jesus, the source of love, to grant us the grace to experience God's unconditional love and share that love with one another (1 Jn. 4:10-11). Let us pray to the Lord... ❧

5. Material power (like money, muscle and weapons) is destructive and is the sign of the insecurity and weakness of the individual, while the spiritual power (like love, kindness, gentleness and goodness) is life-giving and the sign of the real power of the person. Let us ask the powerful Jesus to help us utilize our inner spiritual power to spread peace and harmony in our country through non-violent means. Let us pray to the Lord... **🙏 Lord, make us channels of your peace.**

### **Hymn:**

Make me a channel of your peace - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=daGWdbrSGBM>

### **Concluding Prayer:**

Lord, where shall we go? You are the source of living water and solution to all our problems. Help us Lord to know you and the values you stood for. You are the Prince of Peace and the Fountain of Forgiveness. Forgiveness is the medicine to heal the violence that prevails in the society for various reasons. May all of us become the messengers of peace and love so that there won't be any space for hatred and violence. Lord, continue to inspire us to be more loving, more forgiving and be true to your principles. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. **🙏: Amen.**

A video on non-violent way to heal violence: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=18osj-HoMvU>

*Sch. Samir K. Bhawnra S.J. (RAN) & Team*

## **CAP 2 ENSURE QUALITY EDUCATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE JESUIT TRADITION**

### **CAP2.1 To Ensure Quality Education, Especially for the Poor and Marginalized**

#### **Introduction:**

It is a mission of every Christian to be a channel of peace and joy. Each one of us has power to add something at least to the world's happiness. We can do it in a thousand ways by making our lives a sweet song, by telling others hopeful things of the word of God, by being kind to all we meet. If we have the true spirit of service, we will look upon everything and everyone we meet, as one whom we ever knew. We may not do great or conspicuous things of which people talk, or which will be noticed by others; but every word we speak, every smallest act, every influence we exert in His name, will prove to be a sweet and a blessed ministry of love, and will impart strength and courage. The name of Christ consecrates every smallest deed or influence, filling it with his love.

#### **Preparatory Prayer:**

God of love, help us to live our life in this world according to your plan and purpose. Give strength and wisdom to those whom you have appointed to work in your vineyard, to protect all life and to make a better future for the coming generations.

#### **Grace:**

We ask for the grace to understand the significance and value of God's design in creation and to cooperate with God to foster and promote life on earth.

## **Context:**

Education is an important means of imparting/acquiring essential knowledge and skills. The world is constantly changing and developing, so it is very important to teach and bring up our children and youth, as intelligent people who could understand the problems of modern society and solve them in a proper way. The driving force of all Jesuit educational endeavour should be “improvement in living and learning for the greater glory of God and the common good.” Jesuit schools aim at forming people who will make the most of their God-given talents, and who will use their education to make a difference as ‘men and women for others’, making the world a better place. As one of the pioneers of Jesuit education observed, “To educate the young is to transform the world.”

Jesuit education has the following characteristics:

- assists in the total formation of each individual within the human community;
- prepares for active life commitment;
- serves the faith that does justice;
- seeks to form “men and women for others”;
- awakens a particular concern for the poor;
- includes a religious dimension that permeates the entire education;
- focuses value orientation;
- encourages a realistic knowledge, love and acceptance of self;
- forms men and women of competence, conscience, and compassionate commitment.

## **Reading(s) for Reflection:**

### ***Scripture Passage: Mark 4:30-32:***

“What can we say the kingdom of God is like? It is like a mustard seed which, at the time of its sowing in the soil, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet once it is sown, it grows into the biggest shrub of them all and puts out big branches so that the birds of the air can shelter in its shade.”

## ***Jesuit Sources:***

### **The Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm (1993) n.37:**

“Jesuit schools should be places where people are believed in, honoured and cared for; where natural talents and creative abilities are recognized and celebrated; where individual contributions and accomplishments are appreciated; where everyone is treated fairly and justly; where sacrifice on behalf of the economically poor, the socially deprived, and the educationally disadvantaged is commonplace; where each of us finds the challenge, encouragement and support we need to reach our fullest individual potential for excellence; where we help one another and work together with enthusiasm and generosity, attempting to model concretely in word and action the ideals we uphold.”

### **Father Pedro Arrupe:**

The Society of Jesus is committed to “the service of faith, of which the promotion of justice is an absolute requirement”; it has called for a “reassessment of our traditional apostolic methods, attitudes and institutions with a view to adapting them to the needs of the times, to a world in process of rapid change.” In response to this commitment, the purposes and possibilities of education are being examined, with renewed concern for the poor and disadvantaged. The goal of Jesuit education today is described in terms of the formation of “multiplying agents” and “men and women for others”.

### **Questions to Ponder over:**

1. How does education help the harmonious development of human person?
2. What is the role of education in social orientation and social transformation?
3. How does education cause to create two kinds of citizens? (Elite: who controls resources and institutions, and Non Elite: poorest and less powerful)
4. How does Jesuit education reflect the liberative aspect of education?

(Pause for silent reflection)

## **Prayer of Petitions:**

*Response:* **Jesus our Satguru, dispel our darkness and fill our hearts with love and wisdom.**

1. God, who created human being in your own image, help us by stressing the human aspect of education for the development of all human faculties, the body, the mind, and the spirit. Let us pray... ✠
2. God, imbue students and staff with the social responsibility and commitment so that they may have constant dialogue with the socio-cultural, economic and political environment of the school or college at the local, regional, national, and even international levels. Let us pray... ✠
3. God of liberation, liberate the creative potentialities of our human consciousness so that our Jesuit education will be at the service of humanity for faith and justice. Let us pray... ✠
4. God of righteousness, make us aware of the fact that the operation of dual system of education in our country brings about disparities inequalities between the rich and the poor classes. We have a long way to go to realize the goal of women's education. Lord, let us realize that education is the key to empowering the marginalized, and hence, we need to step up our efforts to achieve this goal as Jesuits. Let us pray... ✠
5. "Everything reflects the One who alone shines." God, help us to inculcate in our students a profound sense of service, and the courage to change the structures and actual conditions which are oppressive and unjust. Lord Jesus help us to understand that your pedagogy which was non-elitist, dialogical, transforming, and prophetic, could be a powerful tool for us Jesuits in this mission. Let us pray... ✠

## Hymn:

Lord hears the cry of the poor, Blessed be the Lord.

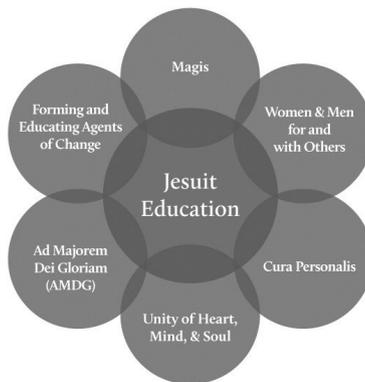
## Concluding Prayer:

God our loving Father and Mother, you are the source of wisdom and knowledge. As Jesus our master and Lord, increased in wisdom and age, and in divine and human favor, bestow your graces and blessings on us and our students and teachers, collaborators and co-workers so that all of us grow in your wisdom and knowledge, in order to be your companions in mission.

Our dear Mother Mary, as you taught Jesus as a child and youth and accompanied Him in doing the will of God the Father, so keep us in your shadow, protect and guide us in the path of righteousness and teach us to do the will of God in our everyday life.

Father, send us the Holy Spirit, to enlighten our minds and hearts, to bless our intellect and knowledge, our effort and learning, and to lead us from untruth to truth, from darkness to light and from death to eternal life. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.  
**Rx:** Amen.

*Sch. Antony Arul Arockiam S.J. (DEL) & Team*



## **CAP 2.2 To Cultivate Qualities of Justice, Peace and Concern for the Other, Especially for Culturally, Socially Different Others and Good Governance at All Levels.**

### **Introduction:**

When God created the world, He found that everything was good. There was great order in the universe. The world did not know sin, until Satan entered the hearts of the human beings. The Satan is still active and the order gets disturbed every day. Our days are marked by violence and conflicts. God created all of us equal in his own image; however, we have distorted that image by denying the others the dignity of their life and marginalized them. Justice and peace have taken the back seat as divisive and discriminatory attitudes rule the day. People in authority have failed to understand that people have elected them to ensure peace and justice to all and not to divide and rule them for their political gains. Let's pray that each one of us may respect the other with love and protect the dignity of every human person irrespective of her or his creed, colour, caste and culture and become the bearers of peace and justice.

### **Preparatory prayer:**

Oh God, our Lord, grant us that all our intentions, actions and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty by bringing in peace and justice in the world for the entire humanity to live with dignity.

### **Grace:**

To identify our divisive and exclusive tendencies towards others and transform them into unitive and inclusive force within us, and

to grow in the joy of building communities founded on peace and justice.

### **Context:**

We cannot hope for sustainable development without peace, stability, human rights and effective governance, based on the rule of law. Yet our world is increasingly divided. Some regions enjoy peace, security and prosperity, while others fall into seemingly endless cycles of conflict and violence. This is not inevitable and must be addressed.

Armed violence and insecurity have a destructive impact on a country's development, affecting economic growth, and often resulting in grievances that last for generations. Sexual violence, crime, exploitation and torture are also prevalent where there is conflict, or no rule of law, and countries must take measures to protect those who are most at risk. Promoting the rule of law and human rights are key to this process, as they reduce the flow of illicit arms to strengthen the participation of developing countries.

### **Reading(s) for Reflection:**

*Scripture Passage: Lk 9:51-56*

### **Church Document:**

Message of His Holiness Pope Francis on 53<sup>rd</sup> World Day of Peace – Peace as a Journey of Hope: Dialogue, Reconciliation and Ecological conversion.

Peace is a great and precious value, the object of our hope and the aspiration of the entire human family. Hope is the virtue that inspires us and keeps us moving forward, even when obstacles seem insurmountable.

Our human community bears, in its memory and its flesh, the scars of ever more devastating wars and conflicts that affect especially the poor and the vulnerable. Entire nations find it difficult to break

free of the chains of exploitation and corruption that fuel hatred and violence. Even today, dignity, physical integrity, freedom, including religious freedom, communal solidarity and hope in the future are denied to a great number of men and women, young and old. Many are the innocent victims of painful humiliation and exclusion, sorrow and injustice, to say nothing of the trauma born of systematic attacks on their people and their loved ones.

The terrible trials of internal and international conflicts, often aggravated by ruthless acts of violence, have an enduring effect on the body and soul of humanity. Every war is a form of fratricide that destroys the human family's innate vocation to brotherhood.

Every threatening situation feeds mistrust and leads people to withdraw into their own safety zone. Mistrust and fear weaken relationships and increase the risk of violence, creating a vicious circle that can never lead to a relationship of peace. Even nuclear deterrence can only produce the illusion of security.

How, then, do we undertake a journey of peace and mutual respect? How do we break the unhealthy mentality of threats and fear? How do we break the current dynamic of distrust?...

We need to pursue a genuine fraternity based on our common origin from God and exercised in dialogue and mutual trust. The desire for peace lies deep within the human heart, and we should not resign ourselves to seeking anything less than this.

### **Questions to Ponder over:**

1. According to Pope Francis the desire for peace lies deep within the human heart. Does my experience corroborate this statement or contradict it?
2. Do you agree violence begets violence, and mistrust and fear have to be eliminated if peace has to have a chance of survival in human community? Why?
3. Do Jesuits, in their educational apostolate, lay sufficient emphasis on the human rights education by making it a part of the curriculum in school and college?

4. Do we accord the foremost importance to child safety and protection of children and vulnerable adults from sexual abuse and exploitation in our institutions?

(Pause for silent reflection)

### **Prayer of Petitions:**

*Response:* **Lord, make us channels of your peace and justice.**

1. Jesus, the merciful face of the heavenly Father, enlighten us with the awareness that all human beings are created in the image and likeness of the same Father in heaven. Bless us with a magnanimous heart that we may reach out to the others regardless of their caste, creed, colour and become instrumental in establishing thy kingdom of equity and fraternity on earth. For this we pray to the Lord... **✠**
2. Jesus, the Prince of Peace we pray, along with St. Francis of Assisi, for the gift of becoming the instruments of peace. Let our presence sow love where there is hatred. Make us the torch bearers of justice and equity so that we may proclaim the good news of love to all humanity and bear witness to you by our actions of charity. For this we pray to the Lord... **✠**
3. Heavenly Father, You are the God of power and might, wisdom and justice. It is only through your blessings that authority is correctly administered, laws are enacted, and judgment is decreed. We pray that you may bestow the political leaders of our country with the gift of the spirit of counsel and fortitude. For this we pray to the Lord... **✠**
4. Heavenly Father, it is your will that all human beings, irrespective of caste, creed and ethnicity come to the knowledge of your truth and be saved. We pray that you send workers into your harvest that the Gospel may be preached to all people. May they be strengthened by the presence of the Holy Spirit so that they may continue the work of salvation and love. For this we pray to the Lord... **✠**

5. Lord God, we pray for the needs of the youth. Bless them with your guiding help as they go through life's stages of growth, challenges, joys and sorrows in their lives. May they be protected from abuses of all kinds and touched by the gentleness of your love so that they may experience human dignity in the time of challenges and sorrows. For this we pray to the Lord... **℟ Lord, make us channels of your peace and justice.**

### **Hymn:**

Blowing in the Wind - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BVV0KHJ6Olw>

(Or)

Make me a channel of your peace - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihhvm6eLWZI>

### **Concluding Prayer:**

Almighty and ever living God, you have created all people as your children. It is your will that they be gathered together with your Son as one family. Fill the hearts of the people with fire of love and with the desire to ensure justice for all. Lord, convert the hearts of those who are in authority so that they will become the instruments to eliminate poverty, prejudice and oppression so that peace and justice may prevail among men and women of various cultures. We make our prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, forever and ever. **℟: Amen.**

*Sch. Pravin Tribhuvan S.J. (PUN) & Team*

## **CAP 2.3 To Protect and Promote the Dignity of Every Person and Community, Irrespective of Caste or Creed.**

### **Introduction:**

God, giver and sustainer of all life, has created us all in His image. Every person is precious and worthy of respect as a member of human family, because human dignity comes from God not from any human quality or accomplishment. We must value each person, created in love by God. Today the reality is just the opposite of what it is supposed to be. Today we are divided by many evil forces which are hampering the unity of our human family. The ones who understand this reality need to demonstrate that life is sacred, and that we are the clearest reflection of God's presence in the world. We need God's mercy and guidance so that our efforts to protect and promote the dignity of each and every person and community irrespective of caste and creed, may be fruitful.

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Lord our God, give us the grace that all our intentions, actions and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of Your Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

We ask for the grace to protect and promote the dignity of every person and community, irrespective of caste or creed.

### **Context:**

In this contemporary world Education is a powerful and time-tested tool for imparting knowledge, values and skills. Nelson

Mandela has said: “Education is a powerful weapon to change the world.” In the present context of India, government pays inadequate attention to education. The New Education Policy 2019 is an attempt at preventing the socially backward and economically underprivileged sections from entering the portals of secondary or higher education and as such, is a great throwback in the history of Indian education. In the circumstances, the inclusive character of our Constitution’s stipulations on education, and universal, free and compulsory primary education need to be upheld at all costs. The need of the hour is to make quality and free education available to all, especially the poor. High costs of education today are leading a lot of poor students to drop out. Government’s plan to commercialize education, will shut the door on higher education to linguistic and religious minorities in our country. It is in this depressing scenario, that the Jesuits are constantly called to provide inclusive and equitable education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. This kind of education system will make the teachers and students more socially responsible, and aim at forming ‘men and women for others’ through the gospel values.

### **Reading(s) for Reflection:**

#### ***Scripture Readings:***

##### **1 Gen. 1.27:**

God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. (See also Gen. 9.6)

##### **2 Prov. 14.31:**

Those who oppress the poor, insult their Maker; but those who are kind to the needy honor him. (See also Prov. 17.5)

#### ***Jesuit Source:***

Fr. Pedro Arrupe, GC 32: The Society of Jesus is committed to “The service of faith, of which the promotion of justice is an absolute requirement”; it has called for a “reassessment of our traditional apostolic methods, attitudes and institutions with a view to adapting them to the needs of the times, to a world in process

of rapid change”. In response to this commitment, the purpose and possibilities of education are being examined, with renewed concern for the poor and disadvantaged. The goal of Jesuit education today is described in terms of the formation of “multiplying agents” and “men and women for others”.

### **Questions to ponder over:**

1. Do we continue to emphasize and impart gospel values in our schools, colleges, and universities?
2. How can we promote inclusive and equitable education and provide lifelong learning opportunities for all?
3. How can we challenge our staff and students to be socially aware and responsible?
4. Are we open to revamp or overhaul our system of education or to initiate radical reforms in our school/college curriculum, in the context of the governments’ interference and impositions that militate against our values and goals?

(Pause for silent reflection)

### **Prayer of Petitions:**

*Response:* **Lord hear our prayer.**

1. That the Jesuit educational institutions may foster academic excellence by imparting moral and human values to the students and thus bring about transformation in the whole society, let us pray to the Lord. ✠
2. That the teachers may be guided by the Spirit of wisdom and knowledge so that they may impart a holistic formation to their students, treating them with care, love and respect, let us pray to the Lord. ✠
3. That the students may be endowed with creative imagination and critical thinking and may be helped to become men and women for others, let us pray to the Lord. ✠

4. That the parents, who are the first educators of their children, may be inspired by the Lord to become responsible parents who will be of support to the children's growth by identifying their interests and talents and allowing them to pursue them, without imposing their own agenda on them, let us pray to the Lord. **℟**  
**Lord hear our prayer.**
5. That all the Jesuits and collaborators, who are directly involved in education, may bring to bear on their endeavours, the Ignatian value of Magis, and encourage the students to strive for excellence, let us pray to the Lord. **℟**
6. That we, the Jesuit educators, all over the world, may give the highest priority in our educational mission to producing “men and women of right principles, personally integrated, intellectually competent, open to the signs of the times, in tune with their cultural milieu and committed to doing justice”, let us pray to the Lord. **℟**

### **Hymn:**

There's my neighbor so lone and forgotten  
Or The world stands in need of liberation, my Lord

### **Concluding Prayer:**

God our father you created us in your image and likeness. While we were living under the influence of sin, you restored our lost dignity by making us sons and daughters in your Son. We thank you for this new gift with which you have blessed us. Today we pray to you to continue to shower your graces on all those who hunger and thirst for a life of dignity, that they may be blessed with the core grace that comes from being your sons and daughters. We make this prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

*Sch. Antony Albert Suresh S.J. (CCU) & Team*

## **CAP 3 PROMOTE ECOLOGY AND JUSTICE**

### **CAP 3.1 To Care for the Earth, Our Common Home**

#### **Introduction:**

Mother earth has sustained human life for thousands of years and she continues to do so just like a mother cares for her unwell baby. Mother earth has been selflessly giving everything to us. She loved us until it hurts her. This is the greatest sign of love that she has shown. However, in return humans have not cared for the mother earth, but manipulated the generosity of the mother earth by misusing the natural resources.

We need an “environmental conversion”, Pope Francis says in his latest book “Thoughts on the environment”. We must start again from forgiveness: first of all, asking forgiveness of the poor and the excluded, next, by asking forgiveness also of “the earth, the sea, the air, the animals.”

The Bible gives various reasons why we should care for the earth. First, God Himself says that His creation is very good (Gen 2:31a).

The second and even more important reason why we should care for the environment is that God told Noah to take all the living things with him in the ark. God specifically commanded the humankind to cultivate and care for the entire creation (Gen 2.15).

The third reason is that one day the cosmos will be renewed and re-created as the “new heaven and new earth”, to which both the Old and New Testaments look forward (Isaiah 65, Revelation 21).

That will bring the fullness of life that God intended for His creation.

## **Preparatory Prayer:**

Lord our God, give us the grace that all our intentions, actions and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of Your Divine Majesty.

## **Grace:**

To feel sorry for the injustice done to the mother earth and for the manipulation of the resources for the selfish gains of human beings. And to grow in the consciousness and awareness of the damages caused to the mother earth, leading to active participation in the restoration and transformation of the mother earth.

## **Context:**

It is an undisputed fact that we humans wonder and marvel at God's creation in spite of the development of modern science. So, if we neglect, abuse and spoil the environment, we are damaging something that is very close to our lives and perhaps, indispensable if humanity should continue to survive. The scenario that is unfolding today with the onset of a pandemic like SARS-CoV-2 or COVID-19 is a telling and tragic reminder of this fact. As on date (10-04-2020) the global tally of victims of COVID-19 is crossing a whopping 100,310 and those infected, a staggering 16,50,276. There have been ever so many epidemics/pandemics in the history of civilization that have threatened to wipe out all human life on earth. If we have survived all these onslaughts and the man-made wars and conflicts, it is thanks to God's infinite patience, providence and guidance as manifested in His creation and man's power of resilience and intelligent and collective response.

## **Reading(s) for Reflection:**

### ***Scripture Reading: Gen 9:8-17 (Cosmic covenant):***

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: "I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you and with every living creature that was with you—the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you—

every living creature on earth. I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth.”

And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth.” So, God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth.”

### **Questions to Ponder over:**

1. Have we forgotten the sacredness of all God’s creatures, the signs of His wondrous love?
2. Why have we forgotten that we ourselves are part and parcel of the earth?
3. How do cultural activities interfere with the ecological balance of the global environment?
4. How is every human society dependent on natural conditions and resources?
5. Can we call our mother earth our forgotten and marginalized neighbor today, who cries out for our love and care as she has become the lost and least of all God’s creatures that serve us?

(Pause for silent reflection)

### **Prayer of Petitions:**

*Response:* **Lord, grant us the grace to recognize you in your creation.**

1. All living beings and the earth are complementary to one another. They are all parts of one whole reality. But human beings have

exploited and neglected the earth out of greed. We too have our part in it directly or indirectly and therefore, ask pardon from God. **℟ Lord, grant us the grace to recognize you in your creation.**

2. The advancement of knowledge and technology has caused havoc to the creation of God. Global warming, irregular monsoon, drought, cyclones, floods, tidal waves and tsunamis are some symptoms of this damage. Lord, give us your wisdom that we may proactively do something to repair the damage we have caused. **℟**
3. Over the years, the forests have been cleared for various purposes. The most affected people by this action are the Tribals, the Dalits and the people at the margins of society. Many times they are evacuated forcefully from their homes. We pray that we may have solidarity with them and support their cause to protect the forest. **℟**
4. Lord, we thank and praise you for the beautiful creation, a sign of your love. Your creations in heaven and earth, have inspired the poets of all cultures and languages to pour out their souls spontaneously and creatively and make humanity happier and richer. Give us the grace that while enjoying such creative expressions and admiring the beauty of your creation we may work for its growth and its sustainability. **℟**
5. Lord, give us the grace to love and serve all the poor and downtrodden people by alleviating their suffering and bringing the necessary change in the world. **℟**
6. God, our Father, the earth is a visible sacrament of your providence and care. Cultivate in us the reverence and respect for your creation. **℟**

**Hymn:** O Lord my God

## Concluding Prayer:

Almighty God, you created the world and gave it into our care so that in obedience we might serve all people, give reverence to all of your creation and respect the rights of all species and the integrity of all elements and thus, become the real stewards of your creation. God, whatever we do affects the whole, either positively or negatively. But being alienated from you we have damaged your creation and created division among us. So, being united with you, enable us to plant the seed of good thoughts, words and deeds so that we all may live with joy and harmony for all eternity. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. **Rz:** Amen.

*Sch. Jeevan Prakash Isahak S.J. (PAT) & Team*



## **CAP 3.2 To Protect the Environment from Pollution and Disasters**

### **Introduction:**

The saddest commentary on the state of the planet earth today has been pronounced by Pope Francis in his document, *Laudato Si'*: “The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth.” Yes. This is, in a nutshell what humankind has made of their home earth, by their unethical exploitation of natural resources to satisfy their selfish ends. We have destroyed the biological diversity of God’s creation, corrupted the integrity of the earth because of our implacable striving for consumption. Global warming, climate change and perhaps even the now raging pandemic COVID-19 are the nature’s warnings to humankind of the dire consequences to come. The time has come for us to realize that human life is closely intertwined in three relationships, according to the Pope: with God, with our neighbor and with the earth itself. The Bible teaches us that this chain has been ruptured by sin. So it is necessary that we correct the imbalance now before it is too late. “We need to wake up and realize that the Earth is our mother, as well as our home; when the earth gets sick we also get sick because we are part of her.” According to many social and medical scientists the COVID-19 is a wakeup call. As Christians we never give up hope in the face of any crisis. Environmental crisis also calls us not to despair but to address the problem with Christian hope.

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh God Our Lord, grant us the grace that all our intentions, actions and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of your Kingdom.

## **Grace:**

We shall seek the grace to recognize the grandeur of God in nature around us and thus, to feel sorry for the injustice done to the mother earth and for the manipulation of the resources for the selfish gains of human beings. And on recognizing it, we may strive to preserve the pristine beauty of God's handiwork, take from it as much as we need and not as much as we may desire, and always choose a simpler way of life.

## **Context:**

The humanity has made giant and quick leaps in the past thirty years in terms of material prosperity, poverty reduction, and deepening democracy. Since the beginning of the liberalization of economy in many countries, the economic pie has been increased in breadth and depth, though its gains have not been equitably shared. The awakening that is daunting the inhabitants of this century is the unmindful and thoughtless growth model that has almost ruined our only livable home, common not just to all human beings but also to the beings of plant and animal kingdom. Today, we are on the verge of sixth biological extinction. One wonders if the global outbreak of COVID-19 that is threatening to decimate human life, if not combated on war-footing, is not in the nature of a biological warfare! The uncomfortable and disturbing truth is that WE are causing this carnage. Even before the basic necessities of a dignified human living become universally accessible, the most populous cities in the world are turning to be unlivable. The air is unbreathable and even hazardous to health. The water is undrinkable. The places of dwelling, unable to accommodate the inflow of economic migrants, are becoming tiny cubicles like the prisons of the early centuries. Despite all the accomplishments that we could be proud of, should we not be concerned about our future and the sustainability of our common home?

## **Reading(s) for Reflection:**

***Scripture Passage: Jn 10:7-16.***

## *Jesuit Sources: GC 36, d. 1, nn. 2, 29 & 30*

### **Questions to Ponder over:**

1. Have I been insensitive in using water more than what is necessary?
2. Have I failed to choose public transport and sought undue luxury?
3. Have I failed to carry reusable bags for marketing?
4. Have we chosen quick-fix solutions to regain our comforts, without being mindful of the harm to nature?

(Pause for silent reflection)

### **Prayer of Petitions:**

*Response: Lord, help us be responsible stewards of your creation.*

1. We pray for the leaders of the world. It is imperative that all of them become aware of putting the interest of whole humanity and the sustainability of our common home at the forefront before they try to advance the self-interest of their nations and citizens. ✠
2. We pray for the manufacturing industries and the makers of things. As they try to produce more and more material goods, may they not compromise the concerns of ecology and the needs of the poor. ✠
3. We pray for the market forces and the economic policies that facilitate them. The current growth model seems to put short-term material progress before a lasting and holistic human development, and it also counts human beings as mere numbers and skilled laborers for the production and consumption of goods. We pray that the markets and economic policies may be founded on life-promoting and dignifying values. ✠

4. We pray for all the religions of the world. As they try to take every human person closer to God in the divine realm, they may not negate the world and its necessary role in achieving that relationship with God. May they inspire us to build a clean and green world. ✠
5. We pray for scientific and technological innovations and innovators. All of us hope that we can heal and restore our nature to its pristine state with the expertise and ingenuity of our scientists and technologists. May they be open to listen to the voice and wisdom of the Spirit. ✠

### **Hymn:**

Every tiny star that twinkles in the night sky - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tQwqAu77bbk> (Or) Choose an appropriate hymn from your language

### **Concluding Prayer:**

Our Loving Father, we thank you for having considered us worthy enough to be created in your image and likeness. We thank you for choosing us to be stewards of your beautiful creation. Let your grace fill us with wonder for what you have offered us. Grant that, beginning from our leaders to the structures that govern our everyday living, we may be aware of the intricate relationship we share with the home you have gifted us. May we prove to be worthy enough for the task you have entrusted to us. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. ✠: Amen.

*Sch. Antony Arul Arockiam S.J. (DEL) & Team*

## **CAP 3.3 To Evolve and Live a Model of Development that is Sustainable**

(To Promote Ecology and Justice through Environmental Education)

### **Introduction:**

Continuous wildfire in Amazon forest and in Australian forest are the serious alarms regarding the great damage to the environment and the consequent global crisis. Only a wise and quick realization that we are not only users of nature but also its protectors, will lead us to actions in caring for our common home. Pope Francis sets before us a way to care for the world. It is indeed our duty to care for the creation through our daily actions, however small they may be. One fine step is through education in environmental responsibility. This will, surely, enlighten and encourage us to do things directly and significantly to care for the affected world around us.

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

O Lord, grant us the interior knowledge to realize the goods we have received from the nature Your marvellous creation, and the heart to appreciate it and the will to protect it.

### **Grace:**

To learn from nature and educate others to learn from nature in the way Jesus himself learnt and educated.

### **Context:**

The challenge of sustainable development is an issue of paramount importance that is being addressed by all nations and international

bodies today. Already in 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals were identified and accepted as reflecting a broad international consensus with regard to the challenges that humanity was expected to face in the 21<sup>st</sup> century given the economic, social and environmental implications for development. As Pope Francis points out in *Laudato Si'*: “An integral ecology includes taking time to recover a serene harmony with creation, reflecting on our life-style and our ideals, and contemplating the Creator who lives among us and surrounds us, whose presence must not be contrived, but found, uncovered.” Apart from this spiritual or mystical dimension we have to keep in mind the centrality of the communitarian dimension of sustainability that resonates with the time-honoured concept of the “common good” found in all religious and philosophic traditions. Thus, sustainable development in today’s context becomes an ineluctable option for all nations, religions and schools of thought, that we, as educators and spiritual leaders, cannot avoid addressing it in all its implications for the human community and for individual men and women.

## **Readings for Prayer:**

*Scripture: Psalm 104: 16 – 31*

## **Church Documents:**

From the Encyclical Letter ‘*Laudato Si'*’ of the Holy Father Francis on “Care for Our Common Home” (n. 210): “Environmental education has broadened its goals. Whereas in the beginning it was mainly centred on scientific information, consciousness-raising and the prevention of environmental risks, it tends now to include a critique of the “myths” of a modernity grounded in a utilitarian mind-set (individualism, unlimited progress, competition, consumerism, the unregulated market). It seeks also to restore the various levels of ecological equilibrium, establishing harmony within ourselves, with others, with nature and other living creatures, and with God. Environmental education should facilitate making the leap towards the transcendent which gives ecological ethics its deepest meaning. It needs educators capable of developing an ethics of ecology, and helping people, through effective pedagogy, to grow in solidarity, responsibility and compassionate care.”

## Questions to Ponder Over:

1. Can our Jesuit education make our students and us givers instead of takers? How?
2. How can our Jesuit education promote culture of life?
3. Do you believe that Jesuits could evolve a model of environmental education for sustainable development?

(Pause for silent reflection)

## Prayer of Petitions:

*Response:* **Lord, give us a true sense of belonging to you and nature.**

1. Lord, Creator of the Universe, we remember with shame that in our past we have exercised the dominion over creation and used them ruthlessly as our commodities. Today the cry of creation is so high that there is increasing threat to life as proved by the current COVID-19 pandemic. Lord, help us to realize that they exist not for us alone but for themselves, as well as for the purpose for which you have created. ✠
2. Almighty God, forgive us for our negligence towards your creation. Help us to leave behind our selfish attitude and behaviour towards nature. Lord, it is through your grace we will be able to renew our life and appreciate the beauty of your creation and thus renew our life by living very close to nature. ✠
3. God, our loving Father, you created this universe full of living and non-living things with the purpose of revering you and serving you. But we have failed to understand and appreciate that purpose. Lord, make us aware of our power to nurture the world today with good thought, deeds and actions. Moreover, give us strength and courage to mend the wounded environment. ✠
4. O God, St. Francis of Assisi mingled himself with all the elements of your creation and raised their hearts to you in glory and praise by personifying them as brothers and sisters. Pour down your

Spirit upon us to imbibe the same spirit of St. Francis so as to acclaim your wondrous and marvellous creation throughout our lives and show our future generations to see the miracles, to touch the softness, to feel the chill breeze, to smell the fragrance and to hear their whispers. ❧

5. O amazing designer of the creation! In every creature lies your love and labour. In a special way you laboured to create us in your image and likeness. You enriched us with knowledge to care for your creature. But, in contrast, we have been exploiting it egoistically. Lord! educate us in approaching creation with due respect, dignity and care. ❧

### **Hymn:**

For the beauty of the Earth - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MHIiRLNYUGw>

(Or)

(Environmental Protection & Awareness song) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H\\_SYldIttxY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H_SYldIttxY)

### **Concluding Prayer:** (Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi)

Most High, all powerful, good Lord,  
Yours are the praises, the glory, the honor,  
and all blessing.  
To You alone, Most High, do they belong,  
and no man is worthy to mention Your name.  
Be praised, my Lord, through all your creatures,  
especially through my lord Brother Sun,  
who brings the day; and you give light through him.  
And he is beautiful and radiant in all his splendor!  
Of you, Most High, he bears the likeness.  
Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon  
and the stars, in heaven you formed them  
clear and precious and beautiful.  
Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Wind,  
and through the air, cloudy and serene,

and every kind of weather through which  
You give sustenance to Your creatures.  
Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water,  
which is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.  
Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Fire,  
through whom you light the night and he is beautiful  
and playful and robust and strong.  
Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Mother Earth,  
who sustains us and governs us and who produces  
varied fruits with colored flowers and herbs.  
Praised be You, my Lord,  
through those who give pardon for Your love,  
and bear infirmity and tribulation.  
Blessed are those who endure in peace  
for by You, Most High, they shall be crowned.  
Praised be You, my Lord,  
through our Sister Bodily Death,  
from whom no living man can escape.  
Woe to those who die in mortal sin.  
Blessed are those whom death will  
find in Your most holy will,  
for the second death shall do them no harm.  
Praise and bless my Lord,  
and give Him thanks  
and serve Him with great humility.  
✠: Amen

*Sch. Stephen Lalruatsaka S.J. (KHM) & Team*

## **CAP 4 ENCOURAGE IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY**

### **CAP 4.1 To Live the Ignatian Charism of Finding God in All Things**

#### **Introduction:**

“The world is charged,” observed Gerard Manley Hopkins, “with the grandeur of God.” God fills the universe and labors in it (Sp. Ex. 236). Every atom, blade of grass, petal of flower, drop of water announces the message that God still loves the world. One needs openness, humility, docility and magnanimity to participate in such mystical experiences of love.

‘Ignatian Theologian’ Jerome Nadal once said: “I shall not fail to recall that grace which he [St. Ignatius] had in all circumstances, while at work or in conversation, of feeling the presence of God and of tasting spiritual things, of being contemplative even in the midst of action; he used to interpret this as seeking God in all things” (GC 34, d. 26, n. 6); the signature spirituality of the Jesuits.

#### **Preparatory Prayer:**

God, our Benevolent One, you are the Alpha and Omega. We love you, thirst for you and seek after you. Help us, we pray, to find you in all things.

#### **Grace:**

That we may strive to journey in His presence, abide in His love, listen to His voice and fulfill His mission of love and service, all the while seeking and finding Him in all things.

## **Context:**

Stories of rape and abuse, lynching and killing, mendacious boasts and deceitful declarations, majoritarian arrogance and contempt for other faiths, detention without charges and intolerance of dissent are on the rise in India and elsewhere. In an age of turmoil and turbulence, skepticism turns one to suspicion which paves the way for opposition and a calamitous throwback to the pre-independent India erasing in the process the gains made in history. The dream of a land that is secular, just, corruption-free in which every individual is respected as a person, and each one works for the common good seems to elude.

But our spirituality is rooted and grounded in the conviction that God is active in our world. As Teilhard de Chardin wrote: “God is not remote from us...” but is in all things “by essence, presence, and power” (Thomas Aquinas). Differently put: “The gate of heaven is everywhere” (Thomas Merton). St Ignatius would have been inspired by the words of St Paul: “to pray without ceasing” (1 Thess. 5: 16-18). It invites us to widen our perspective and “Be still, and know that I am God” (Ps 46:10).

## **Reading(s) for Reflection:**

### ***Scripture:***

Psalms 139:7-12: “Where can I go from your Spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there; . . . If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast.”

### ***Jesuit Sources:***

*Autobiography, 99:* “Every time, any hour, that he [Ignatius] wished to find God, he found Him. He also had many visions when he said Mass, and when he was drawing up the Constitutions too, he had them very often.”

*GC 34, d. 26, nn. 7-8:* The God of Ignatius is the God who is at work in all things: laboring for the salvation of all as in the Contemplation to Attain Love; working immediately and directly with the exercitant as in Annotations 15 and 16; laboring as Christ the King for the liberation of the world; beginning, preserving, directing, and advancing the Society of Jesus as at the beginning and end of the Constitutions.

For a Jesuit, therefore, not just any response to the needs of the men and women of today will do. The initiative must come from the Lord laboring in events and people here and now. God invites us to join him in his labors, on his terms, and in his way. To discover and join the Lord, laboring to bring everything to its fullness, is central to the Jesuit way of proceeding. It is the Ignatian method of prayerful discernment, which can be described as “a constant interplay between experience, reflection, decision, and action, in line with the Jesuit ideal of being ‘contemplative in action.’”

### **Questions to Ponder over:**

1. How do I discover sacred moments in everyday life — grace-filled chances to experience God in nature, my relationships, my academic pursuits, my own stories, and in the stories of people around me?
2. Does my life centre on the life of Christ, on a God in history confronting and challenging me to greater creative and radical form of discipleship?
3. What about doing a “God-mysticism, ... a mysticism of open eyes, which sees more and not less, ... a mysticism that especially makes visible all invisible and inconvenient suffering, and – convenient or not – pays attention to it and takes responsibility for it...” (J. B. Metz)?

(Pause for silent reflection)

## Prayer of Petitions:

*Response:* **God, help us find you in everyone and in everything.**

1. That we may find the sacred in everyday life. ✠
2. That we may look for God not only in great miracles or peak moments in life but also in the little, ordinary, insignificant and common place realities, situations and events. ✠
3. That our “mysticism of open eyes,” enables us to find and serve Him in all. ✠
4. That our concern and care for the least, lost and last may bring comfort and solace to them. ✠
5. That we may eschew prejudices, prejudgments, preconceptions, and broaden our perspectives, views, and opinions to find God in diverse religious faiths and expressions. ✠
6. That we may be humble, docile, open, and attentive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. ✠
7. That we may strive for that *Sensus Christi* in conversation, in dealing with suffering, in and through acts of compassion, and thereby bring joy to all. ✠

## Hymn:

Heal the world...: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BWfeARnf6U>

## Concluding Prayer:

God, our Father and Mother, you are “swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim.” Your ubiquitous splendour is present in light and darkness, in life and death. Your pervasive grace fills the universe. Every common bush is afire with your ineffable extravagant love.

Grant us, we pray, the heart of St. Ignatius, who discovered you in every person, event and experience, in everyplace and every creature, so that we may participate in your mission of loving and healing the world. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. **R̄:** Amen.

*Fr. Valan C. Antony S.J. (CCU)*



## **CAP 4.2 To Articulate Ignatian Dynamics of a Laboring God in Our Cultures and Traditions**

### **Introduction:**

General Congregation 34 had brought together Jesuits from the various cultures of Asia, the former Communist countries of Eastern Europe, the European Community, Africa, North America, Australia and Latin America; this composition has heightened our awareness of the diversity of cultures in both the world and the Society, and of the need to address the importance for our mission of the Gospel and culture.

In recent years, the Church has made this theme one of its central points of reflection. Pope Paul VI wrote: the split between the Gospel and culture is without a doubt the tragedy of our time. More recently, Pope John Paul II has presented inculturation as one of the fundamental aspects of the Church's total evangelizing mission and points to the mutuality between the Gospel and the cultures it engages. The Christian message is to be open to all cultures, bound to no single culture and made accessible to every human person through a process of inculturation, by which the Gospel introduces something new into the culture and the culture brings something new to the richness of the Gospel.

GC 34:559-563 A person of Ignatian Spirituality is never happy with the tried, the ordinary; he/she always looks for new way of doing things, a better way, greater good, for the greater glory of God.

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Lord Jesus Christ open our minds and hearts to understand the Ignatian dynamics of a laboring God in our Cultures and Traditions,

so that we may be able to live it and share it with others in the world today.

### **Grace:**

Dear Lord, give us the grace to respond generously and not to turn away from the challenges of your call, to be open, available, generous and receptive to your invitation; not just any response, but to show greater proof of our love, to be imbued with the spirit of the 'Magis', to surrender totally, to be placed with Christ in his mission.

### **Context:**

Ignatius presents the parable of the call of the King (Sp. Ex. 91-98), who wants to conquer the whole world. It was the imagery of a king that appealed to him. What imagery of a leader who wants to serve the people appeals to me today? From the king imagery Ignatius moves on to Jesus who wants to bring fullness of life to everyone. And Jesus asks me "Do you want to join me?" The invitation is to be with Him, to labour with Him, to suffer with Him, i.e. to identify with Him in every way. After spending the whole night in prayer, Jesus chose the twelve. 1) He calls those whom he personally wanted. 2) He calls them to be with him; to be his companions 3) He sends them out to share in his mission. 4) He calls each one by name; 5) Though they are from different backgrounds and professions he forms them into a community of generous persons. God loves a cheerful giver.

### **Reading(s) for Reflection:**

#### ***Col. 1: 24-29:***

(God has chosen us to continue the work of Christ). I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am completing what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church. I became its servant according to God's commission that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, the mystery that has been hidden throughout the ages

and generations but has now been revealed to his saints. To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. It is he whom we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone in all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil and struggle with all the energy that he powerfully inspires within me.

(Or)

**Mk 3.13-19:** Called to be with him and to be sent out.

### **Questions to Ponder over:**

1. Do I love each member of my community personally for what he is,warts and all, with his physical, spiritual, psychological, social and cultural conditions?
2. How can the life-style of my Jesuit community bear credible witness to the counter cultural values of the gospel so that our service of faith can effectively transform the patterns of local culture?
3. Do our experiences of cultures other than our own help us to open up and become universal in our outlook and more objective about our own native cultures?
4. Do our educational institutions, play a crucial role in linking Christian faith, to the core elements of contemporary and traditional cultures?
5. Do I identify with my people, their aspirations and their struggles as someone called to enrich and elevate their culture with the Gospel values of justice, equality, freedom and love?

(Pause for silent reflection)

## **Prayer of Petitions:**

*Response:* **Lord, hear our prayer and guide us.**

1. Give us, Lord, the wisdom of our founder Saint Ignatius, so that we may recognize and respond to the call of the Spirit in our lives, his active presence in our cultures and traditions. Let us pray to the Lord... **℟**
2. May our evangelizing work be incarnational, in this that we preach the word of God not merely in words but through our life, love, presence and actions, and thus allow the leaven of God's word to work silently and bring forth the desired fruit. Let us pray to the Lord... **℟**
3. That the word of God embedded in the heart of culture, may like a buried seed draws its nourishment from the earth around it and grow to maturity in Christ. Let us pray to the Lord... **℟**
4. Lord as true sons of our Father Ignatius, the author and seeker of the Magis, let us always strive, seek, find and not yield until we achieve the goal of the greater good, greater glory of God and better and newer ways of theologizing and doing things. Let us pray to the Lord... **℟**

## **Hymn:**

Here I am Lord-----Is it I Lord... (Isaiah 6)

## **Concluding Prayer:**

Lord God, we commit ourselves to the creation of genuinely "local churches" which can contribute to the richness of the universal communion of the church of Christ. We will also look for ways of creating indigenous theology, liturgy and spirituality, and upholding the right and freedom of peoples to encounter the gospels without being alienated from their culture.

Lord, in your providence you guided Saint Ignatius to found and establish the Society of Jesus. Now, we beseech you to grant us the

graces necessary to enrich this same Society with an abundance of gifts of the heart, mind, and spirit with which our first companions began their journey. Unite us in your love and Ignatian spirit that we may clearly discern your will as enfleshed in our cultures and traditions. Remove all the obstacles that our upbringing and narrow mindset put in our way, and help us to follow that which we discern as your holy will, with perseverance and faith. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Rz:** Amen.

*Fr. Leander Xalxo S.J. (MAP) & Fr. Caesar D’Cunha S.J.  
(GUJ)*



## **CAP 4.3 To Promote Ignatian Indifference and Magis in Response to a Culture of Consumerism.**

### **Introduction:**

We, the Jesuits as a Universal body, discerned, with the guidance of the Divine Spirit, the four Universal Apostolic Preferences as a way of focusing our God-given mission in the world today. Pope Francis, while approving these preferences, acknowledged the first preference – To show the way to God through the Spiritual Exercises and Discernment – as both the fountain-head and the foundation for the other three preferences. So, to carry out our mission in the contemporary world, our on-going formation in the school of the Exercises is an absolute imperative.

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Oh, God our Lord, grant us that all our intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the praise and service of Your Divine Majesty.

### **Grace:**

We ask our Lord for the grace to grow in inner-freedom and to excel in the spirit of magis for the purpose of collaborating with Christ in his mission.

### **Context:**

Consumerism could be defined as a human behaviour that equates personal happiness with never-ending acquisition and consumption of material things. It is a culture that associates freedom with the freedom of consuming anything of our choice and as a means of

self-fulfillment. It is a culture, maintained and sustained by the advertising industry, that turns consumption into a necessity and as a way of defining ourselves and our self-worth. Of course, things are necessary and inescapable part of our lives, but they can't be used as a means to self-enhancement. To believe that anything material will add something to one's sense of self is an illusion born out of ignorance.

Apart from the spiritual problem, consumerism has also caused problems regarding sustainable existence and survival. We are already consuming resources at an alarming rate, quicker than our planet is able to replenish. The huge rise in resource consumption in wealthier countries has led to an ever-widening gap between the rich and the poor. Consumerism is destroying our environment. Waste disposal is becoming a problem worldwide. There are many other problems associated with consumerism.

### **Reading(s) for Reflection:**

“Every human person is created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means attain fullness of life. And the other things on the face of the earth are created for the human beings, that they may help them in attaining the end for which they are created. From this it follows that they are to use these things as much as they help them on to this end, and ought to rid himself of them so far as they hinder them from it. For this it is necessary to make ourselves indifferent to all created things in all that is allowed to the choice of our free will and is not prohibited to it; so that, on our part, we want not health rather than sickness, riches rather than poverty, honour rather than dishonour, long rather than short life, and so in all the rest; desiring and choosing only what is more conducive for us to the end for which we are created.” (Sp. Ex. 23)

***Scripture Reading(s): Phil. 4:10-13(Or) Lk. 12:22-34; (Or) 1 Thess. 4:1***

***Jesuit Source(s): GC 36, d.1, n.6:***

“... The poverty of life and proximity to the poor of the First Companions in Venice must mark our lives too, that poverty that

engenders creativity and protects us from what limits our availability to respond to God's call. Such poverty of life constantly calls us to reflect on how we can live more simply with less. We pray too to enter ever more fully into that great mystical tradition that our First Fathers bequeathed to us, ever a grace, ever a challenge."

### **Questions to Ponder over:**

1. How do you think Ignatian Indifference (Interior Freedom) and the Ignatian Magis can be useful tools to the moderns to fight against temptations of the culture of consumerism?
2. Do you see the parallel between the Principle and Foundation (PAF) and the teaching of St Paul as set out in his epistle to the Romans Ch. 1: 23-31, pertaining to the modern-day vices that seem to negate and desecrate God's overall plan for humanity?
3. Do you perceive the contradiction between the vision of PAF and the philosophy of having more and consuming more as a sine qua non condition for happiness in the modern world?
4. What do you think is the intrinsic quality in a human being that makes him a child of God and someone who is also nature's child?
5. The ultimate freedom is not the freedom of doing or of consuming anything of your choice, but is the interior freedom to choose to realize your authentic identity and purpose in life. Does the above statement correlate with your belief and your personal experience?

(Pause for silent reflection)

### **Prayer of Petitions:**

*Response: Asatoma sad gamaya; Tamsoma Jyotirgamaya; Mrutyoma Amrutamgamaya.*

1. Lord Jesus, we have been deceived by the delusive mirages in our life. Enlighten our minds with your truth so that we may enjoy true freedom that leads to authentic, and abundant life (Jn: 8:32). ❧

2. Lord Jesus, we have been misled by our misunderstanding of freedom as the freedom of our ego, rather than understanding it as the freedom from our ego. Empower us to use our freedom in serving our sisters and brothers in love (Gal. 5:13). ❧  
**Asatoma sad gamaya; Tamsoma Jyotirgamaya; Mrutyoma Amrutamgamaya.**
3. Lord God, in making use of all the things you have given to us, may we use the simple rule of “In essentials there must be no diminution, in accidentals there can be generous renunciation”. Give us the wisdom Lord, to face the culture of consumerism by applying this simple and profound rule. ❧
4. Lord, we know that a grateful heart is a generous heart. Moved by thankfulness we may make use of your created things with true detachment. ❧
5. Lord God our creator, you have created us and gifted us with all the necessary things that we need for our lives. Moreover, you are giving yourself to us in your gifts. By being present in your gifts for us you continue to labour for us providing growth and care. May we humbly join you in labouring with you. Being united with you we may respond to the culture of consumerism fittingly. ❧

### **Hymn:**

You are what you are looking for - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nt5\\_3cbo31I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nt5_3cbo31I)

### **Concluding Prayer:**

God, our loving Father, we thank you for having created us to praise, reverence and serve you. We thank you for having called us to find you in all things and all things in you. Bless us Lord with the knowledge and spirit of Ignatian Indifference and Magis, so that we may be able to make the proper use of all the created things in so far as they may help us to attain the very purpose for which you have created us. We make this prayer through Jesus Christ you Son Our Lord. ❧: Amen

*Fr. Antony Raj S.J., (JAM) & Fr. Manickam Irudayaraj S.J. (GUJ)*

## **CAP 5 ACCOMPANY YOUTH**

### **CAP 5.1 To Walk with the Youth in Their Search for Truth and Meaning**

#### **Introduction:**

We are living in a post-modern world and perhaps, the youth today are in a maelstrom when it comes to core beliefs, creeds, freedom, philosophy of life, meaning in life, worship and even career options. It is also true that we proudly proclaim ourselves as a knowledge society. Of course, one cannot deny the fact that youth today are also in a privileged position what with the present-day science and technology having brought home to them internet-related gadgets, mobile phone, digital media, social media, knowledge and skills. With all this, can we say that our youth in India or elsewhere in the globalized world are able to lead a contented or happy life, personally integrated and socially inter-related? We have a large chunk of the youth in our institutions and we know how they are in a state of uncertainty, when faced with the problems of life, relationships and coping with stress both academic and professional. So, we have the onerous responsibility of accompanying these youngsters along the path of life in their search for truth and meaning. It is also our bounden duty to pray for them and for those of us who accompany them.

#### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Loving God, in this holy hour as a whole community we place our hearts and minds before you. We pray for the youth. Lord grant us the grace to do your will. Let all divisive and destructive energies give way to positive and life promoting energies.

## **Grace:**

That we as educators may be always ready to dispel the darkness of despair and replace it with hope in the youth that we may prepare a future generation filled with hope, joy and courage for God.

## **Context:**

The crisis of the age is far beyond a typical generation gap. The common culture today promotes radical autonomy and a false concept of freedom. The young people are vulnerable to the influence and temptation of relativism. The lack of religious literacy among the young and the exodus of young people away from the Catholic Church are alarming.

The cultural narrative today supports that truth is subjective and situational, and every individual has the right to create his or her own personal version of the truth. This editorship has entranced and enslaved young minds. The Youth accepting this viewpoint want their thoughts, beliefs, and actions to be received as both valid and correct even if they run counter to God's moral truth. These differing views are creating a cultural chasm in the world. The lack of sane voices that give proper accompaniment and clarity has led the young being fragmented, incoherent, and indifferent to truth and meaning.

## **Reading(s) for Reflection:**

### ***Scripture Passage(s):***

#### ***Sirach 4:11-19 (Wisdom as educator):***

- 11 Wisdom teaches her children  
and gives help to those who seek her.
- 12 Whoever loves her loves life,  
and those who seek her from early morning are filled with joy.
- 13 Whoever holds her fast inherits glory,  
and the Lord blesses the place she enters.

14 Those who serve her minister to the Holy One;  
the Lord loves those who love her...

(Or)

***Wis. 8: 2-8 (Solomon's love for Wisdom); (Or)***

***Lk 2: 51-52 (Hidden life of Jesus).***

### ***Church Documents:***

*Message of the Holy Father to the participants in the 20th Latin American Meeting of Youth Pastoral Leaders (Lima, 18-23 November 2019):* By collaborating in the field of youth ministry, you are rendering the Church a service that cannot be neglected. Young people speak to us and challenge us, they make us realize the lights and shadows of our community, and with their enthusiasm they encourage us to give responses in keeping with our times. They are the fertile and new soil that God gives to Christian communities. You are entrusted with the task of accompanying them with respect and gentleness on the path of their personal maturation, so that they may be strengthened in faith and, with the grace of the Lord, bear fruits of love and hope.

... young people are the “now” of God, because His Son Jesus, Who is the manifestation of His goodness, walks and remains with them, and through Jesus, the Father continues speaking to us in the language of His love, which “has to do more with raising up than knocking down, with reconciling than forbidding, with offering new changes than condemning, with the future than the past .... I encourage you increasingly to deepen your knowledge of the person of Jesus, so that living in the intimacy of His heart, you may become missionary disciples and witnesses of His tenderness, and other young people may draw closer to Him, He Who is eternally young, experiencing the joy of His friendship and leading an existence founded on Christian fraternity and solidarity.

## Questions to Ponder over:

1. What are the blocks that you perceive in youth with regard to understanding the truth?
2. Are we prepared to clear such blocks of Truth? How?
3. How do we perceive the work of ideologies in the minds of youth?
4. Do we Jesuits invest sufficient time, money and human resources for a ministry that the universal Society values so much?

(Pause for silent reflection)

## Prayer of Petitions:

*Response: Lord Jesus, bless the young people and help us walk with them.*

1. We pray for all the generous animators and guides walking with the youth in their quest for truth and meaning in life. Lord help them respond to the call you make to each of them and make them worthy instruments to help the youth realize your authentic way to achieve happiness. **℟**
2. We remember all the youth who find difficult to understand the real value and meaning of their precious lives. Every year hundreds of youth commit suicide finding no meaning in their God-given lives. Lord Jesus, give them your grace so that they live their lives fully. **℟**
3. We remember all the young people who are victims of drug addiction and alcoholism. Lord Jesus be with them and help them find meaning and purpose of their lives and free from their addictions. **℟**
4. We pray for all youth who run behind the atheistic ideologies of the modern world. Lord Jesus, walk with them in their search for truth and meaning. **℟**

5. We remember all the unemployed youth across the globe. There are millions in the world who are in search of a decent job for their livelihood. Lord Jesus, send your grace and be their hope in their hopelessness. ✠
6. We remember all the brain-washed youth who became victims to the violent and extremist ideologies. Lord Jesus, send your grace so that they may find truth and the real meaning of religions. ✠

### **Hymn:**

Here I'm Lord, is it I, Lord - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EcXOkht8w7c>

**(or)**

Oh the Word of my Lord, deep within my being - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GC5UTB1bEcg>

### **Concluding Prayer:**

O Heavenly Father, we thank you for our youth. Thank you for the gifts and blessings you have bestowed upon them. As they are facing various challenges and difficulties in this post-modern world, O Lord, strengthen them with your love, care and concern; and help them in their endeavours so that they may stand firm in their lives and may be able to take up every responsibility they are entrusted with. We make this prayer through Christ Our Lord. ✠: Amen.

*Sch. Pravin Tribhuvan S.J. (PUN) & Team*

## **CAP 5.2 To Be With the Youth in Their Struggles and Joys**

### **Introduction:**

Young people are the pillars of a nation. Tremendous energy is inherent in them. Pope Francis encourages youth to be brave and alive. He challenges them to be courageous and not to flee in the face of difficulties. Fleeing the challenges of life is never a solution according to him. In the modern world, many youths are the victims of attractions of this world. Joys and struggles are very much part of their lives. They long for people who can accompany them. As followers of Jesus, we are endowed with greater responsibility of accompanying youth. We need to help them in the aspect of thinking. To equip them to be able to critique their choices in life is the greatest help that we can render to them. In the process of accompaniment, we need to teach them concrete means of channelizing their energy.

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

God, our loving father, grant us the grace of patience to accompany the youth in their joys and struggles that we may be able to guide them in channelizing their energy for the welfare of humanity.

### **Grace:**

We ask the Lord for the grace to be with the youth in their struggles and joys and to be able to guide them in the right path.

## **Context:**

India is one of the countries in the world holding a large population of young people. They are the most powerful and important asset of our country. They have more energy to excel and potential to conquer the world. But they are easily influenced and manipulated by negative factors such as violence, social media and atrocities. And they are divided by religious fundamentalism. Today's younger generation are demotivated by negative ideologies which create violence and killings. Due to this, the younger generations are facing challenges and struggles. They need to be accompanied. They need to realize that God has created each one of us with a particular purpose. They need to realize the purpose of their creation and dream of it. Pope Francis invites the youth to dream and live it.

Youth is the time when they need to make a lot of decisions which they will have to live throughout their lives. It's the time when they choose their true vocation. They need to dare to take up any vocation that they like and work for it. As Fr. Pedro Arrupe rightly mentioned that the youth should fall in love with their dreams and they will be able to achieve it. Youth also is a time when there are a lot of opportunities to go astray from their dreams. They need to realize the true spirit of the lord and loving presence of the Lord in their struggles and challenges. They need to be accompanied and guided by true spirit of the Lord. Problems and challenges are the signs that there is hope for innovation and a better tomorrow.

## **Reading(s) for Reflection:**

### ***Scripture Passage:***

John 15:1-5: I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes [a] to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed[b] by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.

## **Church Documents:**

*In World Youth Day closing homily, Pope Francis calls young people “the now of God”. Pope Francis issued a powerful “wake up” call to hundreds of thousands of young people from 155 countries, in his homily at the closing Mass of World Youth Day in Panama on Sunday, Jan. 27. He told them, “Dear young people, you are not the future but the now of God and he invites you and calls you in your communities and cities to go out and find your grandparents and elders; to stand up and with them to speak out and realize the dream that the Lord has dreamed for you.” He urged these young people from all continents, as they waved the flags of their home countries, (as Father Pedro Arrupe, former General of the Jesuits had said) “realize that you have a mission and fall in love; that will decide everything.” Francis reminded the young, “we may possess everything, but if we lack the passion of love, we will have nothing.” He appealed to them, “Let us allow the Lord to make us fall in love.”*

## **Questions to Ponder over:**

1. What are the influencing elements in the life of youth - both positively and negatively?
2. How do we help the youth to discover dreams for life and own them persistently?
3. What are the challenges we personally face in guiding the youth?

(Pause for silent Reflection)

## **Prayer of Petitions:**

**Response: Lord, may your spirit accompany the youth and guide them**

1. Lord we pray for all the youth of our nation that they may recognize your presence and your will in what they do and may remain in you and bear your values of justice, peace and love. ✠

2. Lord, you are the light that drives out the darkness and draws all people to holiness. We pray that the younger generation may become aware of the evil forces that affect our Nation so that they may not fall a prey to their false propaganda but they may be drawn towards your love, and may become instruments of the good news. **℟**
3. Lord Jesus, you called each one of us to be a good shepherd to be with the youth in their struggles and moments of challenges and sorrows. Give us courage and wisdom that we may accompany the younger generation and lead them along your way. **℟**
4. Lord Jesus, we pray for those youth who become addicted to social media and drugs. That they may be touched by your healing hands of love and compassion. They may be accompanied by your mercy and forgiveness and be filled with hope. **℟**

### **Hymn:**

Walk with me Oh my Lord...(OR) All to Jesus I surrender, all to Him I freely give

### **Concluding Prayer:**

God of Life and Love, we thank you for pouring the Spirit of love into our hearts. We thank you for your Son Jesus who showed us what it is to love by being totally like your loving Son, totally a person for others. May our daily encounters with you be encounters of love through which we may accompany the youth of our nation in their struggles and joys and become the loving messengers of peace, love and justice. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. **℟**: Amen.

*Sch. Samir K. Bhawnra S.J. (RAN) & Team*

## **CAP 5.3 To Learn from the Youth of Their Aspirations and Hope**

### **Introduction:**

The youth of the world, both male and female, have a penchant for role-models. Our former Pontiff, St John Paul II, who was himself a big draw with the youth, used to say that the youth of today do not want teachers but witnesses. In other words, the youth are looking for role-models whom they could follow in their lives. Hero-worship used to be a rage in former days, when our young boys and girls used to imitate the way of dressing, speaking, walking and even the so called physical mannerisms of celebrities in different spheres, popular political leaders and artists including film actors. Today this cult of individuals has declined to an extent, but seems to persist in the media with a view to influencing the young and impressionable minds of the youth. All said and done, the fact is that today's youth have their own mindset and views when it comes to their aspirations and future prospects. While we should nurture their dreams and aspirations, we have also the responsibility to ensure that they have the right kind of value systems that can fuel and sustain them. It is like a double-edged sword when it comes to accompanying the youth these days. We shall pray for the Spirit's guidance.

### **Preparatory Prayer:**

Lord, our heavenly Father we entrust all the youth of the world under your care. We, with open hearts and minds, come before you to seek your aid in our journey with today's youth. Enlighten our hearts and minds to be effective instruments in accompanying the youth. We also pray to help us to keep ourselves open to the values and life style appreciated by the youth.

## **Grace:**

Let us ask the Lord for the grace that we may recognize the potentials of the present-day youth and may promote their abilities for the greater glory of God.

## **Context:**

We realize that the youth of today, feels pulled and pushed by the presence of different forces operating in the world. Today, the world presents them with myriad opportunities in terms of offering them qualitative education, job, providing the platforms to express themselves in arts and private enterprises. We are also aware of the many problems faced by today's youth in the areas of education opportunities, unemployment, moral relativism, lack of self-esteem to explore the unknown, fear of risk taking etc.

In this scenario, we are called to journey with the youth as well as to offer them guidance whereby they become the light and salt of the world.

## **Reading(s) for Reflection:**

### ***Scripture Passage:***

Matt 19:16-21 – Then someone came to him and said, “Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?” And he said to him, “Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good. If you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments.” He said to him, “Which ones?” And Jesus said, “You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; Honor your father and mother; also, you shall love your neighbour as yourself.” The young man said to him, “I have kept all these; what do I still lack?” Jesus said to him, “If you wish to be perfect, go, sell your possessions, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me”.

## **Church Documents:**

**Christus Vivit, n.49:** “The heart of the Church is also full of young saints who devoted their lives to Christ, many of them even to dying a martyr’s death. They were precious reflections of the young Christ; their radiant witness encourages us and awakens us from our lethargy. The Synod pointed out that “many young saints have allowed the features of youth to shine forth in all their beauty, and in their day they have been real prophets of change. Their example shows what the young are capable of, when they open themselves up to encounter Christ.” (*Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation of the Holy Father Francis To Young People and to the Entire People of God.*)

## **Questions to Ponder over:**

1. Can you think of a recent instance when you were fascinated by the way a young person spoke or acted and the impact that had on you?
2. What could holiness for a young person mean today?
3. What could be some of the expectations the youth have of us and how are we to respond to them?
4. What are some of the ways I can embody Jesus for a young person?

(Pause for silent reflection)

## **Prayer of Petitions:**

**Response: Gracious and merciful Lord, enlighten our hearts and minds.**

1. Through prophet Jeremiah you say “I know the plans I have for you, plans for your welfare and not for your harm, to give you a future with hope.” You have a definite plan for each one of us for our well-being and happiness. Many of the youth today fail to find out their life-goals. Help all of them to come to the realization of their capabilities or potential for greatness. That

they may be able to forgo the wrong ways and follow your path with enthusiasm, ✠

2. Dear Lord, today's success mantra in any field seems to be "I" centred. All are seeking their personal benefit. Pride and greed are driving people in their life. Help all the youth today to shed their worldly values and espouse spiritual and social values with greater zeal. ✠
3. Drugs and alcohol are a leading source of escapism for the youth today. As a result, many deviate from moral values and abandon relationships with their family members. Dear Lord, purify their minds and hearts to see the evils in the world and to say 'NO' to them. That they may be saved from ignorance and wrong ideologies, ✠
4. Young generation is the strength of each community. You also chose 12 young vibrant disciples for spreading your kingdom values. Dear Lord, bless all the young people who are not able to lead a normal life in this world because of their physical and mental challenges. Like a mother be with them, like a father care for them, like a brother love them, so that they can be saved from depression or from copping out, ✠
5. Dear Lord, marriage is the greatest institution you gave to mankind as a basic and permanent unit of love, life and society. We place all the couples, who are struggling to keep their marriage vows intact, into your merciful heart. Lord, bless them that they may understand the value and dignity of family life and respect each other for a healthy marital and family life. ✠

### **Hymn:**

Called to Walk in the Way of the Lord (Or)

What a Friend we have in Jesus

### **Concluding Prayer:**

The world is blessed because the world is having young generation with a variety of ideas and talents. Talents are meant

for the others, for bringing harmony and prosperity in human relationships. Love and peace are the two essential building blocks for the human society. The world can't sustain itself if we generate the opposite qualities instead. Let the youth bring the needed changes in this world. Let us also become a channel for their success by lauding their creative moves as Jesus did. Let our efforts be blessed by the Lord Almighty. ✠: Amen.

*Sch. Antony Albert Suresh S.J. (CCU) & Team*



# Universal Apostolic Preferences of the Society of Jesus

2019-2029

Dear friends in the Lord:

The Universal Apostolic Preferences, which I promulgate with this letter, are the fruit of an election. A choice has been made among several possibilities, all of them good. Our desire has been to find the best way to collaborate in the Lord's mission, the best way to serve the Church at this time, the best contribution we can make with what we are and have, seeking to do what is for the greater divine service and the more universal good.

At the end of the sixteen months that the process lasted at the various levels of the Society, I presented to the Holy Father four universal apostolic preferences:

- A. *To show the way to God through the Spiritual Exercises and discernment;*
- B. *To walk with the poor, the outcasts of the world, those whose dignity has been violated, in a mission of reconciliation and justice;*
- C. *To accompany young people in the creation of a hope-filled future;*
- D. *To collaborate in the care of our Common Home.*

In his confirmation letter of 6 February 2019, Pope Francis observed that “the process that the Society followed to arrive at universal apostolic preferences was (...) a real discernment.” He affirmed that the proposed preferences “are in agreement with the current priorities of the Church as expressed through the ordinary

magisterium of the Pope, the Synods, and the Episcopal Conferences, especially since *Evangelii gaudium*.”

The Holy Father insisted that “the first preference is crucial because it presupposes as a basic condition the Jesuit’s relationship with the Lord in a personal and communal life of prayer and discernment.” And he added: “Without this prayerful attitude the other preferences will not bear fruit.”

## I. Universal Apostolic Preferences 2019-2029

Thanks to the universal apostolic preferences formulated by Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, which have guided us for more than fifteen years, several processes have been initiated which must be continued. These include qualified presence in Africa and China, the responsibility of the whole Society for the interprovincial works in Rome entrusted to us by the Popes, the consistency of our intellectual apostolate, and our service to refugees and migrants. During the next ten years, the following preferences will guide us in incarnating the mission of reconciliation and justice in all the apostolic services to which we, along with others, have been sent.

### A. To show the way to God through the Spiritual Exercises and discernment

We sense that secular society today profoundly challenges the Church in its task of proclaiming the Gospel. As believers we feel an urgent need to overcome both new secularisms and the nostalgia for cultural expressions of the past. **We resolve to collaborate with the Church in experiencing secular society as a sign of the times that affords us the opportunity to renew our presence in the heart of human history.** A mature secularized society opens up spaces for the complex dimensions of human freedom, especially religious freedom. In a mature secular society, the conditions exist for the emergence of circumstances conducive to personal religious processes, independent of social or ethnic pressure, that allow people to ask profound questions and to choose freely to follow Jesus, to belong to an ecclesial community, and to adopt a Christian lifestyle in social, economic, cultural, and political spheres.

The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius of Loyola are a privileged instrument for making the life and action of the Lord Jesus present in diverse social contexts of today's world. Therefore, **we resolve to gain a deeper experience of the Spiritual Exercises** so that they lead us to a personal and communal encounter with Christ that transforms us (Cf. GC 36, d. 1,18).

At the same time, **we resolve to offer the Spiritual Exercises in as many ways as possible**, providing many people, especially the young, the opportunity to make use of them to begin or to advance in following Christ. Experiencing the Spiritual Exercises and the spirituality derived from them is our preferred way of showing the pathway to God through commitment to the redemptive mission of Jesus Christ in history.

We also resolve to **promote discernment as a regular habit for those who choose to follow Christ**. The Society of Jesus is committed to practicing and spreading spiritual discernment, both personal and communal, as the ordinary way of making decisions guided by the Holy Spirit in our lives, our apostolic works, and our ecclesial communities. This is a choice to seek and find the will of God, always, letting ourselves be guided by the Holy Spirit. Through our discernment in common of the apostolic preferences, we have experienced a renewal in our way of proceeding. Therefore, **we resolve to make regular use of spiritual conversation and discernment** in our implementation of the preferences at all levels of the life-mission of the Society (Cf. Pope Francis, *Gaudete et exsultate*, 167 and 169).

We want to share with others the most fundamental discovery of our lives, namely, that discernment and the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius show the way to God. We need to follow the call to deepen our knowledge and experience of Ignatian spirituality, and we want to do so out of a living faith that is incarnate and consistent, a faith nourished by familiarity with God that is the fruit of a life of prayer, a faith that enters into dialogue with other religions and with all cultures. Our faith is manifested in works of justice and reconciliation because it comes from the Crucified and Risen One who leads us to the crucified of this world so that we might be

bearers of hope in the new life that the Lord gives us. Ours is a faith lived in community that becomes a testimony to Hope.

**B. To walk with the poor, the outcasts of the world, those whose dignity has been violated, in a mission of reconciliation and justice**

Sent as companions in a mission of reconciliation and justice, we resolve to walk with individuals and communities that are vulnerable, excluded, marginalized, and humanly impoverished. We commit ourselves to walk with the victims of abuse of power, abuse of conscience, and sexual abuse; with the outcasts of this world; with all those whom the biblical tradition knows as the poor of the earth, to whose cry the Lord responds with his liberating incarnation.

**The necessary condition for becoming companions “on the way” in the style of Jesus is**, out of closeness with the poor, “to announce his Gospel of hope to the many poor who inhabit our world today.” (GC 35, d. 2,13). To come closer to the poor means going out to the human peripheries and to the margins of society, adopting a style of life and work appropriate to the situation so that our accompaniment will be credible. To achieve this goal, we resolve, at all levels of the Society, to discern who are the most vulnerable and excluded persons in our midst and to find ways to walk closely beside them. (Cf. GC 36, d. 1,15).

**The path we seek to follow with the poor is one that promotes social justice and the change of economic, political, and social structures that generate injustice; this path is a necessary dimension of the reconciliation of individuals, peoples, and their cultures with one another, with nature, and with God.** Care for indigenous peoples, their cultures, and their basic rights occupies a special place in our commitment to reconciliation and justice in all their dimensions.

**We confirm our commitment to care for migrants, displaced persons, refugees, and victims of wars and human trafficking. We also resolve to defend the culture and the dignified existence of indigenous peoples.** Consequently, we will continue to help create conditions of hospitality, to accompany all these people in their process of integration into society, and to promote the defense of their rights.

We want to contribute to strengthening political democracy by imparting good civic formation, especially among those at the base of the social pyramid. By promoting social organizations committed to seeking the Common Good, we want to help counteract the pernicious consequences of the diverse forms of “neo-liberalism,” fundamentalism, and populism.

**We commit ourselves to help eliminate abuses inside and outside the Church,** seeking to ensure that victims are heard and properly helped, that justice is done, and that harm is healed. This commitment includes the adoption of clear policies for the prevention of abuse, the ongoing formation of those who are committed to mission, and serious efforts to identify the social origins of abuse. In this way, we effectively promote a culture that safeguards all vulnerable persons, especially minors.

We join many other people and institutions in promoting a culture of hospitality (Cf. GC 36, d. 1,16) and of protecting the rights of children and others made vulnerable by changing social structures (Cf. GC 36, Matters entrusted to Father General).

Accompanying the impoverished requires us to improve our studies, our analysis, and our reflection in order **to understand in depth the economic, political, and social processes that generate such great injustice; we must also contribute to the elaboration of alternative models.** We commit ourselves to promoting a process of globalization that recognizes multiplicity of cultures as a human treasure, protects cultural diversity, and promotes intercultural exchange.

We accompany the poor, inspired by our faith in God the Father of mercy who invites us to embrace reconciliation as the foundation of a new humanity.

### **C. To accompany the young in the creation of a hope-filled future**

The 2018 Synod recognized young people and their situation as a crucial place from which the Church seeks to perceive and discern the movement of the Holy Spirit through this moment of human history.

The poor and the young are a complementary and interwoven locus theologicus. Young people, most of whom are poor, face enormous challenges in our world today, including reduced job opportunities, economic instability, increased political violence, multiple forms of discrimination, progressive degradation of the environment, and other ills, all of which make it difficult for them to find meaning in their lives and to draw closer to God.

Youth is the stage of human life when individuals make the fundamental decisions by which they insert themselves into society, seek to give meaning to their existence, and realize their dreams. By accompanying the young in this process, teaching them discernment and sharing with them the Good News of Jesus Christ, we can show them the way to God that passes through solidarity with human beings and the construction of a more just world.

Young people continue opening up to the future with the hope of building a life of dignity in a reconciled world that is in harmony with the environment. **It is the young who, from their perspective, can help us to understand better the epochal change that we are living and its hope-filled newness.** Today, young people are the principal protagonists of an anthropological transformation that is coming to be through the digital culture of our time, opening humanity to a new historical epoch. We are living through a period of change from which will emerge a new humanity and a new way of structuring human life in its personal and social dimensions. Young people are the bearers of this new form of human life that can find, in the experience of encounter with the Lord Jesus, light for the path toward justice, reconciliation, and peace.

**The apostolic works of the Society of Jesus can make an important contribution to creating and maintaining spaces that are open to young people in society and the Church.** Our works seek to be spaces open to youthful creativity, spaces that both foster an encounter with the God of life revealed by Jesus and deepen the Christian faith of the young. Such spaces should help young people discern the path by which they can achieve happiness by contributing to the well-being of all humankind.

Young people experience the tension between the drive toward cultural homogeneity and the emergence of an intercultural human society that respects and is enriched by diversity. The logic of the market economy leads to homogeneity, but young people aspire instead to diversity that corresponds to the exercise of true freedom and opens up creative spaces that contribute to the emergence of a humane, intercultural society. With that as a base, they can commit themselves to building a culture of safeguarding that guarantees a healthy environment for children and young people, creating conditions that allow all to develop their full potential as human beings.

**To accompany young people demands of us authenticity of life, spiritual depth, and openness to sharing the life-mission that gives meaning to who we are and what we do.** Having these, we can learn, along with the young, to find God in all things, and through our ministries and apostolates, we can help them live this stage of their lives more profoundly. Accompanying young people puts us on the path of personal, communitarian, and institutional conversion.

#### **D. To collaborate in the care of our Common Home**

In the encyclical *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis reminds us that all human beings share responsibility for care of creation, considered by many peoples “mother earth.” “This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her. (...) This is why the earth herself, burdened and laid waste, is among the most abandoned and maltreated of our poor; she ‘groans in travail’” (Rom 8:22). (*Laudato Si*, 2).

The damage done to the earth is also damage done to the most vulnerable, such as indigenous peoples, peasants forced to emigrate, and the inhabitants of urban peripheries. The environmental destruction being caused by the dominant economic system is inflicting intergenerational damage: not only does it affect those now living on earth, particularly the very young, but it also conditions and jeopardizes the life of future generations.

We resolve, considering who we are and the means that we have, **to collaborate with others in the construction of alternative models of life that are based on respect for creation and on a sustainable development capable of producing goods that, when justly distributed, ensure a decent life for all human beings on our planet.** The preservation over time of the conditions of life on our planet is a human responsibility of immense ethical and spiritual importance. Our collaboration should include both participating in efforts to analyze problems in depth and promoting reflection and discernment that will guide us in making decisions that help to heal the wounds already inflicted on the delicate ecological balance. We are especially concerned about areas that are so crucial for maintaining the natural equilibrium that makes life possible, such as the Amazon region; the river basins of the Congo, India, and Indonesia; and the great extensions of open sea. Caring for nature in this way is a form of genuinely worshipping the creative work of God. Bold decisions are required to avoid further damage and to bring about lifestyle changes that are necessary so that the goods of creation are used for the benefit of all. We want to be actively present in this process.

*Laudato Si* reminds us that “disinterested concern for others, and the rejection of every form of self-centeredness and self-absorption, are essential if we truly wish to care for our brothers and sisters and for the natural environment. These attitudes also attune us to the moral imperative of assessing the impact of our every action and personal decision on the world around us.” (*Laudato Si*, 208). It is logical to conclude that what Christians “need is an ‘ecological conversion,’ whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them. Living our vocation to be protectors of God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue.” (*Laudato Si*, 217).

It is necessary, therefore, to step out of oneself and lovingly care for everything that is good for others. A model of human life reconciled with creation will not be possible if we are not able to break out of individualism and inaction.

Conversion for us, Jesuits and our companions in mission, begins by **changing the habits of life** promoted by an economic and

cultural system based on the consumption of an irrational production of goods. The words of Pope Francis encourage us in this direction: “There is a nobility in the duty to care for creation through little daily actions, and it is wonderful how education can bring about real changes in lifestyle.” (*Laudato Si*, 211).

## II. Guided by the Spirit

The process we have gone through has its source in the winds of ecclesial renewal inspired by the Spirit in the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council. That same Spirit, present and active today in the Church, has been at work also in General Congregations 31 to 36, leading the Society through a demanding process of spiritual and apostolic renewal. Inspired by the image of our first companions in Venice (1537), as they pondered where the Spirit was leading them, (Cf. *Autobiography of Ignatius of Loyola* [93-95]) the 36th General Congregation sent us forth as companions on a mission of reconciliation and justice. (“This reconciliation is always a work of justice....The Cross of Christ and our sharing in it are also at the center of God’s work of reconciliation.” GC 36, d. 1, 21).

Inspired by the words of Pope Francis, GC 36 felt the need to return with greater confidence to our origins and to the practice of discernment in common. In sharing our experience during these months, we have come to realize the grace involved in the very process of discernment in common, lived at all levels of the body of the Society. For many, it has meant a rediscovery of some dimensions of Ignatian spirituality: it has helped us to renew the practice of spiritual conversation in order to seek together the way of Jesus; and it has been an exercise of discernment in common as a way of finding God’s will in our life-mission. We have experienced the grace of feeling ourselves to be one united body and of growing in indifference and availability so as to become a discerning community with open horizons. (Cf. GC 36, d. 1, 7-16). With these apostolic preferences we commit to continue forward on the path that we have begun, taking up this fundamental dimension of our life and mission.

We have lived through a process that has produced, step by step, a consensus that we believe is guided by the Holy Spirit. We began

it with many doubts and concerns, not knowing the path well and struggling to overcome skepticism. Like the first companions, we, too, come from diverse origins and cultures, and we have different ways of seeing and understanding things.

But we have found a unity of desire, a common passion to serve Jesus as He carries His cross to all the ends of the earth. Slowly we learned to believe and to trust. We could say that the Lord took us by the hand, like a school teacher, just as he led Ignatius in Manresa. (Cf. *Autobiography of Ignatius of Loyola* [27]). The contributions from the communities, apostolic works, regions, provinces, and from Jesuits in formation provided a vital starting point.

The contributions of the six Conferences of Major Superiors were in surprising agreement. Like the first disciples, we rowed out into the deep and found ourselves in the midst of the storm, but we were amazed to experience how the Lord came to us. It is He, the incarnate, crucified, and risen Lord, who shows us his wounds and invites us to join with him in the quest for justice. He impels us toward new frontiers, accompanying those whom society has discarded, announcing the Good News to one and all, so that they might be transformed by the love of our God. Our hardened hearts are also changing day by day, becoming filled with mercy and compassion.

**This process has taught us that universal apostolic preferences are a means for continuing to be guided by the Spirit.** Moreover, the preferences are an instrument for deepening the style of life-mission indicated by GC 36 when it invites us to spiritual and apostolic renewal, incorporating discernment, collaboration with others, and networking into our daily lives.

We are deeply convinced that the preferences will help the apostolic body of the Society if they maintain a clear unity between life and mission; if we understand them as orientations that go beyond “doing something” and enable us to achieve our transformation as persons, as religious communities, and as apostolic works and institutions in which we collaborate with others. Consequently, while each preference points to some important aspect of our apostolate,

it also invites us to renew our own lives so that our work will be credible and effective.

The preferences seek to embody concretely the mission received as the Lord's response to the cry of a wounded world; the cry of the most vulnerable, who have been displaced and marginalized; the empty rhetoric that divides and dismantles our cultures; the growing chasm between rich and poor; the cry of the young in search of hope and meaning; the cry of the earth and its peoples, who have been degraded to the point of having their very existence put at risk. The preferences seek to respond to a world in which entire generations have never heard about Jesus and his Gospel.

Our Church has been wounded by the sin of its members and all the suffering this has brought. Our Church is sailing in the midst of strong winds. In the Society we have become painfully and humbly aware of our own vulnerabilities and our sin. We feel shame and confusion when we stand before the Lord, asking him to forgive us, to heal us and to show us his merciful love. Only as sinners forgiven and loved can we continue forward. We can bring his compassion to others only if we ourselves, individually and as a body, have experienced that compassion. Indeed, it is our own experience of being loved and saved that gives our desire for mission its depth and energy. It is precisely in the challenges of our wounded world and our own wounds that we hear the gentle but insistent call of the Lord.

**The universal apostolic preferences seek to deepen these processes of personal, communal, and institutional conversion.** They are orientations for improving both the apostolic work of the whole body of the Society and the ways in which we accomplish our ministries, in which the preferences are expressed. At the same time, they seek to help Jesuits and our companions in mission to make their apostolic lives a pathway to God. We want to invite all people to follow the path opened up by Jesus of Nazareth, a path on which we ourselves are walking, following in his footsteps, encouraged by his Spirit.

They are not our preferences. We have followed the Holy Spirit, who has guided and inspired us. We receive them confirmed by the Pope, trusting, like Ignatius and the first companions, that he is the one who has the best vision of the needs of the world and of the Church. The universal apostolic preferences will help us to overcome every form of self-centeredness and corporatism, so that we may become authentic collaborators in the Lord's mission, which we share with so many people inside and outside the Church. The preferences are an opportunity for us to feel that we are the least Society in collaboration with others.

### **III. The necessary personal, communal, and institutional conversion**

The Contemplation to Attain Love (*Spiritual Exercises* [230-237]. Cf. 1 Jn 3, 18) begins with a point that seems to be common sense but which must be continually kept in mind: "Love ought to manifest itself more by deeds than by words." The process of discerning the universal apostolic preferences filled the participants with a profound sense of gratitude for the abundant graces received. At the same time, we experienced **a strong call to personal, communal and institutional conversion.**

Receiving the preferences means that we initiate their implementation immediately by changing any styles of life or work that hinder the renewal of the persons, communities, and works committed to mission. We are inspired by the response of the first apostles, who promptly abandoned their nets and their lives as fishermen in order to set out on the path of discipleship following Jesus. (Cf. Mk 1, 14-20). After the promulgation of the preferences, all the apostolic units of the Society will be provided with resources to help planning their effective implementation. (For example, see <https://jesuits.global/uap>). A necessary dimension of our conversion is **taking responsibility for seeking and properly managing the economic and financial resources** needed to support the apostolic initiatives inspired by the universal apostolic preferences. ("General Congregation 36 affirms that, keeping in mind our commitment to poverty, various financial strategies, opportunities, and implications

must be considered in apostolic planning and decision-making at all levels of Society governance. The Treasurer and other skilled and knowledgeable persons should assist in these processes.” d. 2,18).

**The call is to share the life and mission of Jesus Christ.** At the heart of this call is the love of the One and Triune God who is not paralyzed in the face of the world’s situation but who sends Jesus to take on our humanity and give his life in order to open the gates to divine life and love for all human beings. In dying Jesus expresses the supreme love that vanquishes death. To accept that call is **to give one’s life for love expressed in deeds of reconciliation and justice**; it means being transformed into authentic followers of Jesus and active members of the Church and the Society that serves the mission in collaboration with so many other persons. **Conversion empowers us to take part in the mission:** conversion to faith in the Good News that the Reign of God is at hand, and conversion to a living faith that expresses itself in works that make possible the fulfillment of God’s promise in human history.

Keeping vividly in mind the experience of the first companions in Venice, GC 36 invites us to return to our roots. We reaffirm “what they ... found to be life-giving: sharing their lives together as friends in the Lord; living very close to the lives of the poor; and preaching the Gospel with joy.” (GC 36, d. 1, 4). Making our communities spaces for communal discernment where a life of prayer is encouraged, the Eucharist is shared and spiritual conversation is practiced enables us to share the gift of discernment as a way of letting ourselves be guided by the Spirit in apostolic works and in all ministries. Living simply, close to the poor, awakens the creativity we need to do more with less, (Cf. GC 36, d. 1, 11-16). and it gives greater credibility to our apostolic work offered freely to others.

At the same time, responding to the call of the universal apostolic preferences necessitates that **we strive more than ever for the intellectual depth that our foundational charism and tradition demand; such depth must always be accompanied by an attendant spiritual depth.** The Society is committed to the intellectual apostolate because intellectual depth should characterize all forms of the apostolate of the Society of Jesus. We **want to**

**continue serving the Church through the intellectual apostolate, expressing our faith with intellectual consistency.** Consequently, all members of this apostolic body are called to continue their formation throughout their lives. Intellectual depth demands habits of thought, and so we must not neglect ongoing formation. If we fail in this regard, the Society's contribution to the mission of the Church will not respond to the demands of the Ignatian magis.

The apostolic renewal of the Society of Jesus that will flow from the implementation of the universal apostolic preferences has as a condition **the deepening of collaboration** among Jesuits and our companions in mission and among the ministries and apostolic units, other bodies in the Church, and all the persons and institutions that contribute to the inseparable realities of reconciliation among human beings, with creation, and with God. "That mission is deepened and ministry is extended by collaboration among all with whom we work," states GC 36, confirming the orientations of GC 34 and GC 35. (GC 36, d. 2, 6. Cf. GC35, d. 6, 30; GC 34, dd. 13 and 14).

The experience we have had during the communal discernment of the preferences confirms the perception of GC 36: "Noting remarkable progress in collaboration across the Society, obstacles remain. ... Inclusive discernment and ongoing planning and evaluation of our efforts to go beyond the obstacles is required in order to mainstream the participation of mission partners further in various levels of the Society's apostolic activities and governance." (GC 36, d. 2,7). Complete incorporation of the dimension of collaboration into our life-mission is an essential condition, one without which our desire to render greater service to the Lord's mission will run the risk of not being realized in our works and our way of life.

**With these universal apostolic preferences, we resolve to concentrate and concretize our vital apostolic energies during the next ten years, 2019-2029.** We accept them as a mission of the Church through Pope Francis, who has approved them by confirming the communal discernment that was undertaken by the apostolic body. It corresponds to us, as a body obedient to the Holy Spirit, to plan with diligence the implementation of the preferences in every dimension of our life-mission. **The preferences seek to unleash a**

**process of apostolic revitalization and creativity that makes us better servants of reconciliation and justice.** Let us undertake this process, designing it and assessing it in accord with persons, times, and places in the light of the Church's orientations and the Spirit's guidance.

May Our Lady, the Mother of the Society of Jesus, obtain for us from her Son the grace of integrity of life so that, preaching what allows us to know the Lord and doing what we preach, we may be witnesses of the love of God poured out upon humanity, and impelled by the Holy Spirit, we may effectively collaborate for the reconciliation of all things in Christ.

Rome, 19 February 2019.

**Arturo Sosa, S.J.**  
Superior General

# Prayers of Pope Francis

## 1. Prayer for Growing in Discernment

O Eternal Father of Mercy, together with Mary, the young woman of Nazareth whom you have chosen as the Mother of your Son, I desire to listen to your voice that infuses courage and gives the grace necessary to respond to your call. You read our hearts because you are our Creator and Lord. You know that our heart is restless until it rests in you. In our lives, we will face decisions, especially when we are faced with the fundamental choices on which depends what we will be and what we will do in this world. We humbly beg you: grant us discernment to put in order our thoughts and feelings, to act justly and prudently according to your will. Give us light and wisdom as we look inside and give a name to our fears that anguish us, block us and prevent us from moving forward.

Jesus Christ crucified and risen, God with us, who in Gethsemane felt fear and anguish, sharing with us in everything – except sin – our human condition, we firmly believe that nothing will separate us from your love. Faith in you makes us stable because you are the Rock of fidelity, the love that makes us free and courageous, the ability to overcome fears by opening ourselves to life. We are convinced that you are leading us to eternal life through circumstances and vicissitudes that are often mysterious to us. Teach us how to rediscover silence, that we may be able to listen to your voice within our conscience. Your heart speaks to us through the Holy Scriptures, and is offered to us through your mercy in the sacrament of Reconciliation, to make us one with you in Holy Communion. With trust and humility, let us reach out in dialogue to our vocational guides, brothers and sisters in the faith who – animated by your Holy Spirit – help us to decipher our doubts and to understand your plan of love.

O Holy Spirit, who are the Spirit of wisdom, strength and love, open our hearts when listening to the Gospel so that we may discover ourselves loved by the Father who calls us by name to put ourselves in the footsteps of his Son, Jesus, to become with him and in him a gift for the Church and for our brothers and sisters in Christ. You, our Divine Master, always sustains us, in our moments of trial and darkness, encouraging us to embrace our vocation, which requires a commitment of fidelity to be renewed every day. You enfold us under your wings as you do with Mary of Nazareth, declaring to us that we have found grace in the eyes of the Father who esteems us and considers us precious, having redeemed us with the most precious blood of his Son.

O Mary, a simple girl from a small village in Galilee, pray for us, for our brothers and sisters in Latin America, so that we can experience the love of God within us, a love that gives us the courage here and now to carry forward what God asks of us, living our faith without hiding it. Contemplating your love, my heart is full of joy, as we learn to love God above all things, and to love each other as Jesus has loved us. Help us to respond promptly and joyfully to the vocation to love in this life, communicating the joy of the Gospel to our brothers and sisters in Christ, especially the weakest and poorest of society.

Amen. Alleluia!



## 2. Prayer to Mary during Corona Virus Pandemic

“We fly to your protection, O Holy Mother of God.”

In the present tragic situation, when the whole world is prey to suffering and anxiety, we fly to you, Mother of God and our mother, and seek refuge under your protection.

Virgin Mary, turn your merciful eyes toward us amid this coronavirus pandemic. Comfort those who are distraught and mourn their loved ones who have died, and at times are buried in a way that grieves them deeply. Be close to those who are concerned for their loved ones who are sick and who, in order to prevent the spread of the disease, cannot be close to them. Fill with hope those who are troubled by the uncertainty of the future and the consequences for the economy and employment.

Mother of God and our Mother, pray for us to God, the father of mercies, that this great suffering may end and that hope and peace may dawn anew. Plead with your divine Son, as you did at Cana, so that the families of the sick and the victims be comforted, and their hearts be opened to confidence and trust.

Protect those doctors, nurses, health workers and volunteers who are on the frontline of this emergency, and are risking their lives to save others. Support their heroic effort and grant them strength, generosity and continued health.

Be close to those who assist the sick night and day, and to priests who, in their pastoral concern and fidelity to the Gospel, are trying to help and support everyone.

Blessed Virgin, illumine the minds of men and women engaged in scientific research, that they may find effective solutions to overcome this virus.

Support national leaders, that with wisdom, solicitude and generosity they may come to the aid of those lacking the basic necessities of life and may devise social and economic solutions inspired by farsightedness and solidarity.

Mary Most Holy, stir our consciences, so that the enormous funds invested in developing and stockpiling arms will instead be spent on promoting effective research on how to prevent similar tragedies from occurring in the future.

Beloved Mother, help us realize that we are all members of one great family and to recognize the bond that unites us, so that, in a spirit of fraternity and solidarity, we can help to alleviate countless situations of poverty and need. Make us strong in faith, persevering in service, constant in prayer.

Mary, Consolation of the afflicted, embrace all your children in distress and pray that God will stretch out his all-powerful hand and free us from this terrible pandemic, so that life can serenely resume its normal course.

To you, who shine on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope, do we entrust ourselves, O Clement, O Loving, O Sweet Virgin Mary. Amen.



### 3. Prayer for the Youth

Lord Jesus,

in journeying towards the (Synod) Kingdom, your Church  
turns her attention to all the young people of the world.  
We pray that they might boldly take charge of their lives,  
aim for the most beautiful and profound things of life  
and always keep their hearts unencumbered.

Accompanied by wise and generous guides, help them respond to  
the call you make to each of them,  
to realize a proper plan of life and achieve happiness.  
Keep their hearts open to dreaming great dreams  
and make them concerned for the good of others.

Like the Beloved Disciple, may they stand at the foot of the Cross,  
to receive your Mother as a gift from you.  
May they be witnesses to your Resurrection  
and be aware that you are at their side  
as they joyously proclaim you as Lord.

Amen.



### 4. A Prayer for Our Earth

*(Laudato Si)*

All-powerful God,  
you are present in the whole universe  
and in the smallest of your creatures.  
You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.  
Pour out upon us the power of your love,  
that we may protect life and beauty.  
Fill us with peace, that we may live  
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.  
O God of the poor,  
help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth,  
so precious in your eyes.  
Bring healing to our lives,  
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,  
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts  
of those who look only for gain  
at the expense of the poor and the earth.  
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,  
to be filled with awe and contemplation,  
to recognize that we are profoundly united  
with every creature  
as we journey towards your infinite light.  
We thank you for being with us each day.  
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle  
for justice, love and peace.



### **A Christian prayer in union with creation**

Father, we praise you with all your creatures.  
They came forth from your all-powerful hand;  
they are yours, filled with your presence and your tender love.  
Praise be to you!

Son of God, Jesus,  
through you all things were made.  
You were formed in the womb of Mary our Mother,  
you became part of this earth,  
and you gazed upon this world with human eyes.  
Today you are alive in every creature  
in your risen glory.  
Praise be to you!

Holy Spirit, by your light  
you guide this world towards the Father's love  
and accompany creation as it groans in travail.  
You also dwell in our hearts  
and you inspire us to do what is good.  
Praise be to you!

Triune Lord, wondrous community of infinite love,  
teach us to contemplate you  
in the beauty of the universe,  
for all things speak of you.  
Awaken our praise and thankfulness

for every being that you have made.  
Give us the grace to feel profoundly joined  
to everything that is.

God of love, show us our place in this world  
as channels of your love  
for all the creatures of this earth,  
for not one of them is forgotten in your sight.  
Enlighten those who possess power and money  
that they may avoid the sin of indifference,  
that they may love the common good, advance the weak,  
and care for this world in which we live.  
The poor and the earth are crying out.  
O Lord, seize us with your power and light,  
help us to protect all life,  
to prepare for a better future,  
for the coming of your Kingdom  
of justice, peace, love and beauty.  
Praise be to you!

Amen.



*Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*

# UNIVERSAL APOSTOLIC PREFERENCES

2019 - 2029

Society of Jesus

To show the way to God through the Spiritual Exercises and discernment.



To walk with the poor, the outcasts of the world, those whose dignity has been violated, in a mission of reconciliation and justice.



To collaborate in the care of our Common Home.



To accompany the young in the creation of a hope-filled future.



## Pope Francis wrote to Fr. Arturo Sosa:

- "the process that the Society followed to arrive at universal apostolic preferences was (...) a real discernment."
- the preferences, "are in harmony with the present priorities of the church (as) expressed through the ordinary magisterium of the Pope, of the synods and of the Episcopal Conferences especially since *Evangelii gaudium*."
- "the first U.A.P. is fundamental because it presupposes as a basic condition the relation of the Jesuit with the Lord, his personal and communitarian life of prayer and discernment."
- "I recommend that, in your service as superior general, you insist above all of this. Without this prayerful attitude, the rest will not function."
- "This work, which I Approve and confirm as a mission."

